



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Parliament

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION, 1920-21.

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EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

FIRST SESSION.

Governor-General.*

His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY WILLIAM, BARON FORSTER, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

* From 6th October, 1920.

Australian National Government.

(From 10th January, 1918.)

Prime Minister and Attorney-General	..	..	The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, P.C., K.C.
Minister for the Navy	..	..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable W. H. Laird Smith (28th July, 1920).
Treasurer	..	..	The Right Honorable Lord Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (27th March, 1918).††††
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G. (28th July, 1920).
Minister for Defence	..	..	The Honorable George Foster Pearce.
Minister for Repatriation	..	..	The Honorable Edward Davis Millen.
Minister for Works and Railways	..	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom (27th March, 1918).
Minister for Home and Territories	..	..	The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.†††
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Alexander Poynton, O.B.E. (4th February, 1920).
Minister for Trade and Customs	..	..	The Honorable Jens August Jensen.†
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (13th December, 1918).
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (17th January, 1919).
Postmaster-General	..	..	The Honorable William Webster.†††
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable George Henry Wise (4th February, 1920).
Minister for Health	..	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (10th March, 1921).
Vice-President of the Executive Council	..	..	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Edward John Russell (27th March, 1918).
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Edward John Russell.
			Appointed Vice-President of the Executive Council, 27th March, 1918
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton.
			Appointed Minister for Home and Territories, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable George Henry Wise.
			Appointed Postmaster-General, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene.*
			Appointed Minister for Trade and Customs, 17th January, 1919.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Richard Beaumont Orchard.**
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Sir Granville de Laune Ryrie, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D.††
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable William Henry Laird Smith.††
			Appointed Minister for the Navy, 28th July, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Arthur Stanislaus Rodgers.***

* Appointed 26th March, 1918.—† Removed from office, 13th December, 1918.—** Resigned office, 31st January, 1919.—†† Appointed 4th February, 1920.—††† Resigned 3rd February, 1920.—†††† Resignation from office gazetted, 15th June, 1920.—*** Appointed 28th July, 1920.

Senators.

(From 1st July, 1920.)

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.

Chairman of Committees—Senator Thomas Jerome Kingston Bakhap.

*Adamson, John, C.B.E. (Q.)	*Glasgow, Sir Thomas William, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (Q.)
Bakhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston (T.)	*Guthrie, James Francois (V.)
*Benny, Benjamin (S.A.)	*Guthrie, Robert Storrie (S.A.)
Bolton, William Kinsey, C.B.E., V.D. (V.)	Henderson, George (W.A.)
*Buzacott, Richard (W.A.)	Keating, Hon. John Henry (T.)
*Cox, Charles Frederick, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (N.S.W.)	*Lynch, Patrick Joseph (W.A.)
Crawford, Thomas William (Q.)	Millen, Hon. Edward Davis (N.S.W.)
De Largie, Hon. Hugh (W.A.)	*Millen, John Dunlop (T.)
*Drake-Brockman, Edmund Alfred, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (W.A.)	*1 Newland, John, C.B.E. (S.A.)
*Duncan, Walter Leslie (N.S.W.)	*Payne, Hon. Herbert James Mockford (T.)
Earle, Hon. John (T.)	*2 Pearce, Hon. George Foster (W.A.)
*Elliott, Harold Edward, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M. (V.)	*1 Plain, William (V.)
Fairbairn, George (V.)	Pratten, Herbert Edward (N.S.W.)
Foll, Hattil Spencer (Q.)	Reid, Matthew (Q.)
*Foster, George Matthew (T.)	*1 Rowell, James, C.B., V.D. (S.A.)
*Gardiner, Albert (N.S.W.)	*Russell, Hon. Edward John (V.)
*Givens, Hon. Thomas (Q.)	Senior, William (S.A.)
	Thomas, Hon. Josiah (N.S.W.)
	*Vardon, Edward Charles (S.A.)
	*Wilson, Reginald Victor (S.A.)

1. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 21st July, 1920. 2. Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 21st July, 1920. 3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 26th February, 1920. 4. Deceased reported, 6th April, 1921. 5. Appointed by State Governor in Council, 18th February, 1921. Sworn 6th April, 1921. * Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 1st July, 1920.

than an instrument for the making of profit. I make no apology for my statement. It is in the best interests of this country that we should speak plainly in order that those at the seat of the Imperial Government may know that we desire them to prove their sympathy by deeds and not by words alone. I should like them to understand that we in Australia, whilst we have every desire to maintain and safeguard the interests of Australia, and recognise that the people of this country have first call on us, feel it our duty to co-operate cordially with the Imperial statesmen if it is possible for us to do so. We are not, however, going to allow ourselves to be dominated by those great agencies which are the creation of war, and involved in further payments for naval and military purposes until the people of Australia have had an opportunity of expressing their opinion.

DECLARATION OF URGENCY.

Sir JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Treasurer) [1.37 a.m.].—I declare this motion to be an urgent motion, and move—

That the motion be considered an urgent motion.

I am doing this merely as a precaution to get the vote taken to-day (Friday). If only those who are here had to deal with the matter I should be quite sure of my ground, but we cannot tell what those who are away may do to-morrow when they turn up.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

LIMITATION OF DEBATE.

Sir JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Treasurer) [1.38].—I move—

That the time allotted for the debate on the motion and the amendment be until 3.45 p.m. this day (Friday).

Mr. RYAN (West Sydney) [1.40 a.m.].—I regret that the Treasurer has moved to curtail the debate on such an important matter as this. It would be most unfortunate if, through the moving of this motion of urgency, any honorable member were prevented from expressing his views upon the question. I know that we cannot prevent the motion being carried, but I should like to have an understanding as to whether the carrying of it will interfere in any way with the transaction of ordinary business in the morning.

13 M

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The Speaker might leave the chair until 11 o'clock instead of adjourning the House, and that would prevent any other business intervening.

Mr. RYAN.—That is what I am trying to prevent. I do not think that we should curtail the privileges of members at the next sitting. Some other business of an urgent nature might arise, and I hope that it will not be interfered with in any way.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Debate on original question (on motion by **Mr. FOWLER**) adjourned.

House adjourned at 1.48 a.m. (Friday).

Senate.

Friday, 22 April, 1921.

The **PRESIDENT** (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

TRAINING OF AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Senator GARDINER.—(*By leave.*)—When addressing myself to the Defence Bill yesterday afternoon I made the following statement:—

The expenditure would be less, and the result more satisfactory.

I went on to say—

I think it was in this Chamber or in another place that an officer said that a man going into action at Gallipoli informed him that he had never had the opportunity of firing a rifle.

Senator Cox.—I do not think that statement is correct.

Senator GARDINER.—I am merely repeating what I have heard.

Senator Cox.—I think it is a deliberate lie.

Senator GARDINER.—I am trying to repeat something that is in my mind to demonstrate the inefficiency of our training system.

I now wish to read for the information of honorable senators what was in my mind. I quote from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 2nd April, 1921, words from an address delivered by **Sir Brudenell White**. He said—

He had many sad recollections of the war, but none more sad than the recollection of an episode prior to the operations in August at Gallipoli, in which our great attack at Suvla

and our operations at Lone Pine were carried out. He remembered seeing some men who had arrived only a few days before as reinforcements. He remembered one of the men saying to him, "Do you think this is a fair thing?" He replied, "How do you mean?" The answer was, "Do you think it is fair to put us into action with the amount of training we have had?" "How much training have you had?" he asked. One man informed him that he had five weeks in Egypt, had fired his rifle only once, and had never thrown a bomb. Another man had been six weeks in Egypt, and, according to his story, had fired his rifle only twice. Upon all of them in authority, proceeded the lecturer, there rested an enormous responsibility.

I direct attention to that statement because I think honorable senators will, upon hearing it read, agree that my remarks were a sufficiently accurate report of it not to be termed "a deliberate lie."

Senator NEWLAND.—That remark was not applied to the honorable senator.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—Order! I did not understand Senator Cox to state that Senator Gardiner was telling a deliberate lie. If I had understood him to do so, I should have immediately called him to order, and should have compelled him to withdraw the statement. I understood Senator Cox merely to say that the statement repeated by Senator Gardiner was a deliberate lie. I have no authority to prevent any honorable senator describing a statement made outside this chamber by one who is not a member of the Senate in any terms he pleases.

Senator COX.—(*By leave.*)—I had no intention whatever of asserting that Senator Gardiner told a deliberate lie. Nothing was further from my thoughts. I understood from the honorable senator that he was only quoting the words of some other person. I must admit that I did not know that men had actually landed at Gallipoli who had only fired one or two shots. That never came under my notice. That class of man never came to me, and I had command of a regiment there for a great portion of the time, and command of a brigade for some months before the evacuation. I would not on any account insinuate that Senator Gardiner was telling a lie. I knew that he was quoting some other person for the statement he made. Although a man is said to have stated that he only fired one shot, that is not to say that he had not fired one before, or had not handled a rifle, in Australia.

The PRESIDENT.—Order! The honorable senator is, I think, going beyond a personal explanation.

Senator COX.—I apologize to Senator Gardiner if he feels that the remark I made is offensive to him.

PUBLIC SERVICE.

APPOINTMENTS SINCE 30TH JUNE, 1920.

Senator WILSON.—Following upon a question I submitted recently to the Leader of the Government in the Senate, calling for a list of new appointments since 30th June, 1920, of officers whose salary is in excess of £350 per annum, it will be remembered that I was promised a more complete list than that supplied to me at the time. I wish now to ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate whether he is in a position to supply the fuller list for which I asked?

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—As Senator Wilson has already informed the House, the following list, which I lay on the table, is supplementary to the information with which he has already been supplied:—

STATEMENT of Appointments by Federal Government and Promotions in Federal Service since 30th June, 1920, at salaries in excess of £350 per annum.

Appointee, Position, Annual Salary.

- Mr. Atlee Hunt, Public Service Arbitrator, £2,000.
- Brigadier-General E. A. Wisdom, Administrator, New Guinea Territory, £1,800 and residence.
- Captain E. M. Wright, Official Secretary, New Guinea Territory, £650 and quarters.
- Mr. E. T. Brown, Special Magistrate, New Guinea Territory, £1,000 and quarters.
- Colonel A. Honman, Principal Medical Officer, New Guinea Territory, £800 and quarters.
- Lieutenant-Colonel D. S. Wanliss, Chief Judge, New Guinea Territory, £1,000 and quarters.
- Captain K. Drake-Brockman, Judge, New Guinea Territory, £1,000 and quarters.
- Captain A. J. Hunter, District Officer, New Guinea Territory, £575 and quarters.
- Lieutenant-Colonel J. Walstab, District Officer, New Guinea Territory, £575 and quarters.
- Major McAdam, District Officer, New Guinea Territory, £575 and quarters.
- Captain D. Waugh, District Officer, New Guinea Territory, £575 and quarters.
- Mr. P. Hunter, Director of Immigration, London, £1,500, plus £500 allowance.
- Mr. H. S. Gullett, Superintendent of Immigration in Australia, £1,500.
- Mr. E. N. Robinson, Publicity Officer, Immigration in Australia, £750.
- Mr. T. E. Sedgwick, Immigration Officer, London, £600.
- Brigadier-General T. Griffiths, Administrator, Nauru, £1,500, plus residence.

- Mr. H. B. Pope, Commissioner for Australia, Board of Commissioners, British Phosphate Commission, £2,000.
- Mr. J. M. Semmens, Chairman, Repatriation Commission, £1,500.
- Mr. A. H. Teece, Member, Repatriation Commission, £1,200.
- Mr. J. E. Barrett, Member, Repatriation Commission, £1,200. (Mr. Barrett was engaged in the Repatriation Department at £775 prior to appointment to the Commission.)
- E. S. Little, Trade Commissioner in China, £2,000.
- G. H. Knibbs, Director of the Institute of Science and Industry, £2,000.
- A. F. Newman, Senior Clerk, Radio Central Staff (Exempt), Postmaster-General's Department, £400.
- F. J. B. Hayes, Industrial Officer and Legal Adviser to Naval Board, £480.
- R. Hodson, Electrician, Class D, Garden, Island, £462.
- J. W. Elliott, Manager, Departmental Meat Supply, Commonwealth Railways, £360.
- D. C. Cameron, Assistant Civil Engineer, Flinders Naval Depot, Works and Railways Department, £408.
- G. L. Harrison, Structural Draughtsman, Sydney, £390, plus £30 allowance.
- E. G. Hicks, Publicity Officer, War Service Homes Commission, Melbourne, £600.
- W. Triggs, Senior Clerk, War Service Homes Commission, Melbourne, £460.
- C. C. Hatfield, Insurance Officer, War Service Homes Commission, Melbourne, £460.
- G. G. Gluth, District Works Officer, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £408.
- D. C. Robertson, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £354.
- W. J. Sprott, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £354.
- G. M. Ingram, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £354.
- W. Taylor, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £354.
- James Loynes, Deputy Commissioner, War Service Homes Commission, Queensland, £550. (Subsequently increased to £600.)
- E. Smith, Deputy Commissioner, War Service Homes Commission, Western Australia, £550. (Subsequently increased to £600.)
- J. M. Prentice, Chief Clerk, War Service Homes Commission, Tasmania, £360.
- W. G. Cameron, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, New South Wales, £446.
- W. R. Wood, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, New South Wales, £446.
- D. H. Jenkins, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £446.
- J. H. Gardiner, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £446.
- F. G. Hartley, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £446.
- S. A. Macfarlane, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Queensland, £446.
- F. H. Weston, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, South Australia, £446.
- A. L. Tait, Temporary District Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, South Australia, £446.
- F. C. Urquhart, Administrator of Northern Territory, £1,500.
- J. R. B. O'Sullivan, Protector of Aborigines, Daly River, Northern Territory, £400.
- Captain R. A. N. Plant, Private Secretary to Administrator, Northern Territory, £360.
- P. J. Breen, Liquor Storeman, in charge Liquor Store, Government Hotels, Northern Territory, £400.
- F. T. Macartney, Clerk, Northern Territory Service, to be Stenographer and Typist, £360.
- Lieutenant-General J. W. Parnell, Administrator, Norfolk Island, £700. (£100 allowance.)
- H. C. Brinsmead, Controller of Civil Aviation, Department of Defence, £750.
- F. W. Pollett, Superintendent of Aircraft, Department of Defence, £516.
- E. J. Jones, Superintendent, Civilian Flying Operations, Department of Defence, £516.
- E. C. Johnston, Superintendent of Aerodromes, Department of Defence, £516.
- N. A. Esserman, Physicist, Munitions Supplies Branch, £354.
- W. R. Jewell, Chemist, Class E, Munitions Supplies Branch, £372.
- H. W. Pickett, Assistant to Chief Inspector, Commonwealth Arsenal, Munitions Supplies Branch, £354.
- A. C. Johnston, Assistant Manager, Woollen Cloth Factory, £432.
- J. M. Badger, Accountant, Woollen Cloth Factory, £400.

PROMOTIONS.

*Name, Position to which Promoted,
Annual Salary.*

- M. L. Shepherd, Official Secretary in Great Britain, High Commissioner's Office London, £2,000.
- P. E. Deane, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, £1,250.
- H. C. Brown, Secretary, Shipbuilding Branch, (Prime Minister's Department), £900.
- C. R. Callister, Pottery Clay Investigator, Institute of Science and Industry, £400.
- H. Wardale-Greenwood, Secretary, Bureau of Commerce and Industry, £550.
- W. L. Artlett, General Superintendent, Transportation and Stores, Commonwealth Railways, £750.
- A. W. Lawrence, Traffic Superintendent, Commonwealth Railways, £440.
- F. James, Chief Draughtsman, Commonwealth Railways, £400.
- E. R. Bradshaw, Principal Architect, War Service Homes Commission, Central Staff, £800.
- J. C. Morrell, Director of Lands, War Service Homes Commission (Central), £750.

- C. W. Peterson, Chief Clerk and Secretary, War Service Homes Commission (Central), £750.
- W. R. Bailey, Chief Accountant, War Service Homes Commission (Central), £700. (Resigned 16th October, 1920, re-appointed, 7th March, 1921.)
- W. G. Barber, Accounts Clerk, War Service Homes Commission (Central), £420.
- B. G. Hutson, Legal Clerk, War Service Homes Commission (Central), £403.
- D. J. Hutchings, Deputy Commissioner, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £800.
- C. W. R. Maughan, Chief Clerk, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £500.
- S. E. Napier, Officer in Charge, Legal Section, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £462.
- S. J. Nutt, Senior Inspector, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £426.
- C. Parkes, Senior Draughtsman, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £354.
- R. Bruce, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £354.
- S. W. Booth, Inspector of Works, New South Wales, War Service Homes Commission, £354.
- C. F. Gage, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, New South Wales, £354.
- J. J. Tait, Deputy Commissioner, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £850.
- W. S. Anderson, Legal Officer, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £498.
- T. R. Casboulte, Architect, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £498.
- J. W. Witton, Chief Clerk, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £420.
- F. R. O'Connell, Purchasing Officer, Supplies Clerk, Supplies Officer, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £400.
- J. R. Moffatt, Senior Draughtsman, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £372.
- S. J. Nichols, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £354.
- J. H. McLochlin, Electrical Inspector, War Service Homes Commission, Victoria, £350.
- R. C. Nowland, Draughtsman Architect, War Service Homes Commission, Queensland, £498.
- G. Milner, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Queensland, £408.
- J. S. Williams, Inspector of Works, War Service Homes Commission, Queensland, £408.
- O. A. Beattie, Draughtsman Architect, War Service Homes Commission, Western Australia, £408.
- J. M. Beckwith, Senior Inspector, War Service Homes Commission, Western Australia, £408.
- W. Taylor, Deputy Commissioner, War Service Homes Commission, Tasmania, £550. (Subsequently increased to £600.)
- A. Turner, Senior Inspector, War Service Homes Commission, Tasmania, £375.
- F. T. J. Taylor, Clerk, Public Service Inspector's Office, Victoria, £420.
- R. H. Reeves, Local Auditor, Victoria, £520.
- R. Ford, Accountant, Shipbuilding Branch, £420.
- H. H. Ling, Local Auditor, South Australia, £520.
- R. H. Allars, Commonwealth Electoral Officer, Home and Territories Department, £420.
- O. H. Stephens, Commonwealth Electoral Officer, Home and Territories Department, £420.
- F. W. Barford, Computer, Home and Territories Department, £408.
- A. Percival, Surveyor, Home and Territories Department, £432, plus £84 S.
- W. M. Warrick, Surveyor, Home and Territories Department, £432, plus £84 S.
- H. F. E. Whitlam, Deputy Crown Solicitor, Sydney, £700.
- G. A. Watson, Senior Clerk, Crown Solicitor's Office, Sydney, £516.
- K. C. Waugh, Clerk, Crown Solicitor's Office, Sydney, £408.
- R. G. Ferguson, Commissioner of Patents and Registrar of Trade Marks and Designs, £900.
- C. V. Watson, Deputy Commissioner of Patents, £650.
- A. J. Macdonald, Supervising Examiner of Patents, £516.
- H. D. Evans, Examiner of Patents, £408.
- B. Jones, Examiner of Patents, £408.
- E. J. Howells, Examiner of Patents, £408.
- C. A. S. Teece, Examiner of Patents, £408.
- G. S. Brown, Registrar of Copyright, £460.
- J. M. J. Tait, Works Inspector, Works and Railways Department, £528.
- C. A. Hoy, Architect, Works and Railways Department, £444.
- E. H. Henderson, Architect, Works and Railways Department, £426.
- D. M. Ray, Inspector, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £540.
- H. F. Brodribb, Clerk, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £420.
- G. C. M. Pain, Valuer, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £450.
- T. J. Russell, Senior Assessor, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £460.
- G. Barrett, Chief Assessor, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £420.
- J. Adams, Senior Clerk, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £520.
- R. W. Chenoweth, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £520.
- J. E. Martin, Chief Assessor, Taxation Branch, Department of Treasury, Victoria, £420.
- J. Y. McGrath, Chief Assessor, Taxation Branch, Department of the Treasury, Central Administration, £360.
- R. C. Hancock, Secretary, Taxation Branch, Department of the Treasury, Central Administration, £520.
- J. F. Hughes, Senior Clerk, Taxation Branch, Department of the Treasury, Central Administration, £420.
- W. Kelly, Senior Clerk, Taxation Branch, Department of the Treasury, Central Administration, £420.

- A. B. D. Brown, Chief Assessor, Taxation Branch, Department of the Treasury, Central Administration, £420.
- M. T. Keely, Deputy Commissioner of Taxation, Brisbane, £750.
- M. D. Mears, Senior Clerk, Taxation, Brisbane, £420.
- M. J. O'Flaherty, Chief Assessor, Taxation, Brisbane, £360.
- L. S. Jackson, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, New South Wales, £520.
- J. N. O'Connor, Senior Clerk and Chief Assessor, £420.
- A. Metford, Assistant Commissioner of Invalid and Old-age Pensions and Maternity Allowances, Pensions Branch, Department of Treasury, £500, plus £40 S.
- A. J. Metcalfe, Quarantine Officer, Department of Health, £600.
- F. W. A. Ponsford, Quarantine Officer, Department of Health, £600.
- P. Whitton, Deputy Comptroller-General, Department of Trade and Customs (Central), £1,000.
- J. J. H. Airey, District Officer and Deputy Director of Navigation (Central), £564, plus £90 A.
- C. R. Hunter, District Engineer (Central), £354, plus £72 S.
- L. Bolger, District Officer and Deputy Director of Navigation (Central), £564, plus £90 S.
- J. Henry, District Officer and Deputy Director of Navigation (Central), £564, plus £90 S.
- J. Higgins, District Engineer, £516.
- W. D. Taylor, Inspector, Department of Trade and Customs, New South Wales, £460.
- H. Harvie, Inspector, Department of Trade and Customs, New South Wales, £460.
- W. E. Cooper, Inspector, Department of Trade and Customs, New South Wales, £420.
- A. E. H. Roberts, Boarding Inspector, Department of Trade and Customs, Victoria, £420.
- F. G. Wilson, Accountant, Department of Trade and Customs, Queensland, £360.
- E. Dean, Clerk, Postmaster-General's Department (Central), £420.
- J. Malone, Deputy Director (Radio Branch), (Central), £606.
- W. Legg, Inspector, Postmaster-General's Department, New South Wales, £420.
- T. Finlay, Clerk in Charge, Telephone Accounts, Postmaster-General's Department, New South Wales, £420.
- E. A. Langsworth, Assistant Manager Telephones, Postmaster-General's Department, New South Wales, £420.
- A. D. Godso, Clerk, Correspondence Records and Staff Branch, Postmaster-General's Department, Victoria, £420.
- S. Rankin, Manager, Telephones, Postmaster-General's Department, Queensland, £520.
- J. C. McPhee, Secretary, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £750.
- H. C. Elvins, Chief Accountant, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £700.
- T. A. Kealy, Assistant Accountant, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £500.
- A. G. Gilmore, Clerk to Repatriation Commission, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £500.
- W. Keays, Senior Clerk, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £400.
- G. W. Bennett, Inspector, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £520.
- N. F. Burrowes, Clerk, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £360.
- T. Hooks, Clerk (Vocational Training Matters), Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £400.
- C. J. Cornell, Senior Pensions Officer, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £700.
- M. J. Hillary, Clerk, Pensions, Repatriation Department, Head-Quarters, £360.
- A. G. Farr, Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Department, New South Wales, £800.
- H. Beresford, Accountant, Repatriation Department, New South Wales, £480.
- A. J. Baillie, Sub-Accountant, Repatriation Department, New South Wales, £380.
- W. E. Foxall, Officer-in-Charge, Assistance, Repatriation Department, New South Wales, £420.
- R. J. Forrest, Officer-in-Charge, Pensions, Repatriation Department, New South Wales, £420.
- M. B. Ryan, Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Department, Victoria, £800.
- A. G. Moyes, Officer-in-Charge, Assistance, Repatriation Department, Victoria, £420.
- W. Dunstan, Accountant, Repatriation Department, Victoria, £480.
- H. K. Charge, Officer-in-Charge, Vocational Training, Repatriation Department, Victoria, £480.
- C. Bartram, Assistant Officer-in-Charge, Vocational Training, Repatriation Department, Victoria. (Subsequently promoted to Officer-in-Charge, Pensions, with salary at £420.)
- J. C. Henderson, Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Department, Queensland, £600.
- E. A. Wallace, Accountant, Repatriation Department, Queensland, £400.
- L. Edwards, Accountant, Repatriation Department, Queensland, £380.
- J. W. Bell, Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Department, South Australia, £600.
- L. E. Tilney, Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Department, Western Australia, £600.
- H. Davey, Accountant, Repatriation Department, Western Australia, £380.
- J. F. Humphris, Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Department, Tasmania, £520.
- E. Mc.G. Christie, Government Secretary, Northern Territory, £700.
- L. H. A. Giles, Accountant, Darwin, £500.
- W. T. Skeet, Postmaster, Queensland, £432.
- D. G. Sinclair, Postmaster, Queensland, £432.
- A. W. White, Inspector, Postmaster-General's Department, South Australia, £420.
- A. Macdonald, Inspector, Postmaster-General's Department, South Australia, £420.
- L. H. Griffiths, Manager, Telephones, Postmaster-General's Department, South Australia, £520.
- J. M. Gough, Ordnance Officer, 3rd Military District, Department of Defence, £420.
- P. E. Coleman, Secretary, Air Council and Air Board, Department of Defence, £420.

G. P. Embelton, Secretary, Contract and Supply Board, Department of Defence (Central), £420.

W. R. Kerr, Chief Clerk, Commonwealth Arsenal, Class 2, £440.

J. D. Statton, Assistant Manager, Class C, Small Arms Factory. (Position reclassified), £516.

E. G. Monk, Superintendent of Danger Buildings, Class D, Cordite Factory. (Position reclassified), £408.

D. McDonald, Accountant, Clothing Factory. (Position reclassified), £420.

TASMANIAN MAIL SERVICE.

Senator BAKHAP asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. What is the general position in regard to the contract for mail service between Victoria and Tasmania, now that the steam-ship *Nairana* is in commission, and is participating in the running?

2. In particular, does the contract insure three steamer trips each way every week throughout the year, or will a steamer leaving Launceston only on Mondays and Fridays during some months be deemed by the Postmaster-General to be in accordance with the terms of the contract for service?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answer is—

1 and 2. Application has been made by the contractors for variation of the contract, and this is now under consideration.

DEFENCE FORCE.

APPOINTMENT OF MAJOR-GENERAL GELLIBRAND.

Senator ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

In view of the provisions of the Defence Act 1903-1918, relating to the appointment and promotion of officers in the Citizen Forces under what authority was the recent appointment made of Major-General Sir John Gellibrand to command the 3rd Division of the Citizen Forces in Victoria?

Senator PEARCE.—The answer is—

All officers who served with the Australian Imperial Force, and who were not, prior to the war, members of the Australian Military Forces (see section 16A, Defence Act) were upon their return to Australia granted commissions in the Citizen Forces equivalent to those held by them in the Australian Imperial Force, under section 22 of the Defence Act, supported by the second proviso of section 11A of the Defence Act.

Major-General Gellibrand's proposed appointment is further enabled under section 14 of the Defence Act.

POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

SALARIES OF ENGINEER'S BRANCH.

Senator GARDINER asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. How many officers of the Clerical Division, 6th Class, Engineer's Branch, Postmaster-General's Department, Victoria, are at present receiving the maximum salary of the 5th Class?

2. How many clerical officers (5th Class clerks) are members of the Engineer's Branch in Victoria?

3. What opportunities have been given to these officers for promotion to the 4th Class?

4. What opportunities have been afforded these officers to transfer to other Departments where they may qualify for 4th Class?

Senator RUSSELL.—Inquiries are being made, and replies will be furnished as early as possible.

CASE OF REV. J. B. RONALD.

Senator GARDINER asked the Minister representing the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Has the Prime Minister received through the Governor-General a petition of grace presented to His Majesty the King by Mr. Andrew Fisher on behalf of the Hon. J. B. Ronald?

2. Did not the High Commissioner, when presenting the petition to His Majesty the King, write as follows:—"This man (Ronald) has been the victim of outrageous injustice and comes here (London) for redress"?

3. Is the Prime Minister of the same opinion that Mr. Ronald was the victim of outrageous injustice?

4. If so, is he not in duty bound to correct such injustice, if he has a mandate from His Majesty the King in person to inquire into the circumstances which brought about this denial of British justice?

5. Has the attention of the Prime Minister been drawn to a statement in the *Age* on 6th April instant, under the heading of "The Census—The case of the Rev. J. B. Ronald," where it was stated that Mr. Ronald, though under a penalty of £50, could not give satisfactory answers to the queries—"Are you the head of a household," "What is your occupation," "Are you a married man," "Are you a British subject," all these being negated by a corrupt verdict?

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—The answers are—

1. The Government have received through the Governor-General a petition presented to His Majesty the King by the Rev. J. B. Ronald.

2. The Government are not aware of the statement, if any, made by the late High Commissioner in connexion with this matter.

3 and 4. The Prime Minister has previously stated that the Commonwealth Government has no jurisdiction in this case, which is one entirely within the province of the Victorian

State Government, to whom the matter was referred. The petition presented to His Majesty by Mr. Ronald was referred, at the King's command, through the Governor-General, for consideration; so far as the Government are aware His Majesty did not command that an inquiry be held.

5. Yes.

NORTHERN TERRITORY.

WAGES RATES AT DARWIN.

Senator ROWELL (for Senator FAIRBAIRN) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

Whether, in view of the enormous expense of clearing the aviation ground near Darwin, he does not consider it advisable to discontinue further work at Darwin until wages rates become normal?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answer is—

The statements published as to the nature and cost of the work referred to are not correct, the amount having been very much overstated, and the quantity of work understated.

It is, however, the intention of the Minister, on the occasion of his forthcoming visit to Darwin, to personally look into the question of the future Public Works policy of the Northern Territory.

IRON AND STEEL BOUNTIES.

Senator GARDINER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. What is the total amount of money that has been paid by the Federal Government by way of bounties for the encouragement of the iron and steel industries within the Commonwealth?

2. To whom have such bounties been paid?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answers are—

1. £229,411.

2. G. and C. Hoskins Limited, Lithgow, New South Wales, and Lysaght Brothers and Company Limited, Sydney.

INCOME TAX.

ALLEGED EXEMPTION FROM TAX OF SIR JOHN HIGGINS.

Senator GARDINER asked the Leader of the Government in the Senate, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that the salary of £10,000 per annum paid to Sir John Higgins, as Chairman of the Wool Board, is exempt from income tax?

2. Who is responsible for this exemption?

3. Will the Government exempt from income tax the wages of all working men who are not in receipt of £250 per annum?

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—The answers are—

1 and 2. The Government have not exempted Sir John Higgins from payment of income tax in respect of his salary as Chairman of the Australian Board of the British-Australian Wool Realization Association Limited, but it is understood that his remuneration in that connexion has been fixed at an amount that provides for a salary of £10,000 after income tax has been paid.

3. The whole question of payment of income tax will receive consideration by the Government on receipt of the report of the Royal Commission on Taxation.

WHEAT.

GUARANTEE OF PRICE.

Senator HENDERSON (for Senator LYNCH) asked the Minister representing the Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether, in view of the decision of the Queensland Government to give a guarantee of 8s. per bushel on all wheat grown in Queensland, the Government will consider the wisdom, in the interests of increased production and stabilizing our chief rural industry, of giving an equal or lower guarantee, say 6s. per bushel, for a period of three years on all wheat grown throughout the Commonwealth?

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—It is too early to decide the conditions for the production of next year's crop. The Commonwealth Government will, later on, give consideration to the whole wheat question.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

Motion (by Senator SENIOR) agreed to—

That the report from the Printing Committee presented to the Senate, 21st April, 1921, be adopted.

AIR DEFENCE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 14th April (*vide* page 7445), on motion by Senator Pearce—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

On which Senator J. D. MILLEN had moved—

That all the words after the word "That" be left out, with a view to adding the following words:—"further proceedings on the Air Defence Bill be postponed until the return of the Prime Minister from the Imperial Conference."

Senator NEWLAND (South Australia) [11.14].—When the debate on this Bill

was adjourned I had been referring to the fact that persons who believe in peace at any price are entitled to have their opinions respected and considered, but the defence of Australia must necessarily overshadow their objections. Yesterday we heard a great deal about defence matters. It is high time that the Government seriously consider a scheme under which men who are retired after serving a number of years in the Defence Department, may have some provision made for their future. The quicker the Government establish a system of pensions or of superannuation for them, the better it will be for all concerned. It was indicated during the course of the debate yesterday that men who are admittedly incompetent are being retained in the Defence Department because it is felt that an injustice would be done by placing them upon the retired list after many years of faithful service, when they are practically unfit for any other occupation.

The Bill provides that certain men shall be retired from the Air Force at the early age of 40 years. In any other occupation a man at that age would be in his prime. But, as the Minister has remarked, the Air Service is essentially a young man's job, and the earlier an individual enters it the better. But unless some other position in the Air Force can be found for them, these men will be retired at the comparatively early age of 40 years, and at a time when it will be too late for them to qualify for positions in any other calling. Personally, I believe that no branch of our Military Service has greater claims to a retiring allowance than have the members of our Air Force.

There is just one other matter to which I desire to direct attention. We have at Duntroon a Military College, and at Jervis Bay a Naval College. Today, the parents of young men in Australia are asking themselves what there is ahead of their boys who may desire to enter either of these institutions. If I had a son who was eligible for admission to Duntroon and who desired to take up a military career, I am inclined to think that I would use my influence to prevent him doing so, simply because there is so little inducement

Senator Newland.

offered to members of the military profession at a later period of their lives. I quite agree with the Minister that it would be unreasonable to expect the nation to incur the expense of preparing a young man for a military career and then to part with his services immediately he had finished his course of training. For that reason every inducement should be held out to the best young men in the Commonwealth to enter our Naval and Military Colleges, and that object may best be achieved by making provision for the future of those who take up such careers.

I have little further to say upon this Bill. I recognise that an Air Force must become a necessary adjunct to our defence scheme. I recognise too, that such a force will cost the people of this country, in the years to come, a very considerable sum of money. But I believe that they are prepared to pay that money cheerfully. It is idle for us to pretend that the establishment of an Air Force will not add to the cost of the military machine in Australia. It will do so, and the only thing which this Parliament can do is to see that it does not unduly add to that cost. We have to face the problem of effectively defending our country and also of training a certain number of young men in this particular arm of our Defence Service. The only way in which the expenditure can be kept down to a reasonable figure is by the encouragement of civil aviation, by offering inducements to private individuals and firms to engage in that particular form of transport. The men who did engage in it would provide the military authorities, should the necessity ever arise, with a large number of experts in the handling of flying machines. I can see no advantage in delaying the consideration of the Bill until the return of the Prime Minister from England. We have to deal with it, and we might as well deal with it now as later on, thereby permitting the military authorities to get the aviation branch of our defence scheme into working order as soon as possible.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [11.24].—There has been a fear exhibited amongst quite a number of honorable senators that

the passing of this Bill will of necessity involve the Commonwealth in a very large additional expenditure from the standpoint of the administration of the Defence Department. But during the week-end I went very carefully through the measure, with the result that I am perfectly satisfied that the statements made by the Minister himself are correct. The honorable gentleman told us that the administrative cost of this new branch of our Defence Force will be infinitesimal, as he intends to utilize for administrative purposes the services of officers who are already in the employ of the Commonwealth. Nobody can question the necessity for bestowing special attention upon this branch of our defence. During the great war we were all satisfied that the Air Services of the Empire were practically the eyes of the Army and Navy. But for them the Empire would have cut a very sorry figure indeed. Thanks to the energy displayed in bringing those services to the perfection which they reached, we were able to emerge from the great struggle victoriously. A few days ago I was told that I had only to look at one of the Melbourne newspapers to see that a large expenditure had already been incurred upon the aviation branch of our Defence Department. But reference to the journal in question merely served to show that the appointments which have been made are confined to those who are engaged in the practical operations of the Air Service. I have the list before me now. Lest any honorable senator should be under the impression that these are administrative appointments at large salaries, I wish to say that they comprise the appointment of a wing commander, a squadron leader, flight lieutenants, a flying officer, an observer, and squadron leaders. All these appointments affect only the practical operations of the Air Service.

Senator PEARCE.—Practically all of the appointees are flying men.

Senator PAYNE.—Exactly. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, chiefly because, in the present condition of the world's affairs, we must recognise that we are far from having reached a position in which the need for maintaining our armaments to a reasonable extent has disappeared. The suggestion that we should delay the passing of this measure

until the return of the Prime Minister from the Imperial Conference is a most dangerous one, because nobody can foresee what may happen in the course of a few months. I am not pessimistic enough to believe that we are likely to be plunged into a great war in the immediate future. But as long as there are threatening clouds it would be folly for us to neglect the maintenance of our Defence Force. Before the outbreak of war, we in Australia had been paying an annual insurance premium in respect of both our military and our naval defence. We are now asked to pay an annual premium upon a policy connected with the Air Branch of our Defence Force. No reasonable person, no matter how anxious he may be to economize, particularly at a time like the present, will be foolish enough to suggest that we can afford to rub along without taking out an insurance policy in connexion with our air defence. In his remarks upon this Bill, Senator Gardiner seemed to entirely ignore the statements which were made by the Minister for Defence in moving the second reading of the Bill. Practically the whole of his observations were directed to the very large expenditure which he affirms will be involved in its passing.

The Minister has pointed out that through the generosity of the British authorities we have been presented with a large number of aeroplanes, and it would be folly on our part if we did not utilize them in times of peace in such a way as to bring into existence a really efficient Air Force that would be exceptionally useful in any future hostilities. I heard reference made the other day to the enthusiasm which had been displayed by the Minister regarding Defence matters. One remark was that the Minister was so saturated with this enthusiasm that he had no time to think of the financial obligations entailed in carrying out defence operations. I am pleased that we have a Minister who is saturated with Defence, and so enthusiastic as to throw his whole heart and soul into these great questions. Although I hold no brief for the Minister it is only fair to remember at this time of peace the fine work put in by him during the war. If we had not had a Minister who threw his whole heart and soul into the work intrusted to him there, we should probably not have had such a

fine administration of the Defence Department during the war period.

Some honorable senators have expressed the view that we are not holding out sufficient inducement to those who might be capable of proving themselves very good officers and men in our flying department, because we are making no provision for their position in life after they reach the age of forty. I indorse a good deal that has been said in this connexion, and am hopeful that the time is not far distant when, not only in this and all other branches of the Defence Department but also in all Departments of the Commonwealth, ample provision will be made, by the establishment of a Superannuation Fund based on a sound foundation, to insure that any man who enters the Public Service of the Commonwealth shall have something to keep him when age forces him to retire.

I think we are all satisfied that, having voted a large sum of money, as we did last year, for Air Defence, the time has arrived when we should see to it that the Air Defence Department is properly administered. During the interval between the time the money was voted and to-day, the Air Defence Force has been administered by the Naval and Military authorities, but the branch has grown to such an extent quite recently that it behoves us to see that we have a thoroughly efficient administration of it in regard to the operations to be carried out in the future. I give my hearty accord to the second reading of the Bill, and trust that any feeling that may exist that it will entail for administrative purposes heavy expense on the people of the Commonwealth, who are already very severely taxed, can be swept away for the time being. Surely the Parliament of Australia will be able, if any effort should be made by the Minister to increase the administrative costs unduly, to put the brake on. At the present time there is no necessity to do so, because I am satisfied, as I think most honorable senators are, that the administrative portion of this Department will not add any material burden to our finances. If in the future an attempt should be made to overburden the administration by making a very large number of appointments at high salaries, we shall have it in our power to enter our protest, and that will be the right time to do it.

Senator Payne.

At present we can do no more than support the second reading of the Bill in order to give the Minister the power he requires to make this new branch of our Defence as permanent and as satisfactory as possible.

Senator FOSTER (Tasmania) [11.36].—There seems to be confusion in the minds of some honorable senators as to the use of an Air Force for the defence of a country in time of war. Some have suggested that a properly equipped Air Force might take the place of modern battleships in defending the Commonwealth. The records of the war, however, show no case where a battleship suffered material damage from an air ship. Senator Cox can bear out my statement that, particularly in the desert warfare in Palestine, troops suffered very severely in open spaces from attacks launched from aeroplanes either with bombs or machine gun fire, but it is utterly ridiculous to suppose, as one honorable senator suggested, that air craft might be useful in stopping the advance of warships upon these shores. No one would suggest that aeroplanes caused any material damage in the trenches in France either by bombs or machine gun fire. When it comes to using them as an arm of the Service, either for offensive or defensive measures, their usefulness may be summed up in the phrase "the Air Force is the eyes of the Defence Scheme." Their great usefulness is in finding the disposition of enemy troops or enemy positions. With my limited knowledge I shall not criticise the attitude of the Government in establishing an Air Defence Force for Australia, whether it costs £500,000 or more, nor do I think the time is opportune for postponing the measure, seeing that Parliament has already voted the money to be expended for this purpose, that a certain amount of preliminary work has already been done, that negotiations have been entered into for the purchase of certain seaplanes, and that applications have been called for from officers for this Force. Numbers of our returned airmen have been waiting for a year or more for finality to be reached regarding their possible applications for positions. It is, therefore, necessary for the Government to go on with this scheme. We recently passed a skeleton Act dealing with Civil Aviation, which

is being administered by regulations, of which a couple of hundred have been gazetted. The Controller of Civil Aviation is to have a seat on the Air Council. I much regret that the Government have not gone beyond the stage of expressing hope, and have not given actual assistance to civil aviation.

Senator PEARCE.—Oh, yes, we have. What we have done has not been made public, but we have done one or two things that are helpful.

Senator FOSTER.—I was about to point out that it was found necessary recently in England to subsidize the Handley-Page Co., who were running the London-Paris aerial service. The company were able to show the British Government that they could not compete successfully with the French companies who were running an aerial passenger service, because the French Government were subsidizing the latter fairly heavily. There is in Australia a number of companies, established principally for the purpose of carrying passengers, although one or two attempts have been made to carry freight, and for some time the Postmaster-General (Mr. Wise) has been talking about seeing whether an aerial mail delivery could be established for certain isolated districts. I have no knowledge of what the Minister for Defence refers to when he says the Government have done certain things to assist civil aviation, but as the hope has been expressed that civil aviation may become more useful and extensive in Australia, it would be a good thing if the Government were to subsidize in some measure either pilots engaged in civil aviation or machines which, being used for civil purposes in times of peace, might automatically pass under the control of the Air Defence Department at a time of war.

Senator SENIOR.—Would it not be better to form aerodromes where we should have something that was permanent, whereas machines are not?

Senator FOSTER.—The Minister gave us some useful and valuable information the other day, when he told us that certain work was being done in that direction, and that municipalities lying on the possible routes of aeroplane services, particularly on certain North-South and East-West journeys, had been asked to supply information about landing grounds,

and the possibilities of establishing hangars and aerodromes. But when one knows, as I know, that the Australian companies which have been endeavouring to establish civil aviation on a commercial basis are having a very hard go, and have had to put up a very hard fight to make their enterprise successful, one cannot help thinking that something more needs to be done from the Government stand-point. I was inclined to agree with the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition (Senator Gardiner) that it would be a fine thing for Australia if the Government subsidized or undertook on their own behalf the manufacture of aeroplane engines in Australia. A great deal has been made in some quarters of the fact that Great Britain presented us with a number of aeroplanes, but it is alleged by some officers, who are supposed to know, that some of those machines are years old, and will very shortly become absolutely out of date, if they are not so at present. I want it to be distinctly understood that in saying this I am not decrying in any way the wonderful gift made to us by the Mother Country. I am merely endeavouring to look at the facts squarely.

Senator PEARCE.—They may be out of date for fighting purposes and yet quite good for training.

Senator FOSTER.—I was going to say that they may be useful for the purpose of instructing pilots and mechanics, but it is wrong to assume, as apparently some honorable senators have assumed, that these machines are of any great value, even at the present time, for defensive purposes. I agree that the idea of establishing, in times of peace, the nucleus of an Air Defence Force is a wise one. But supposing that the aeroplanes which have been presented to us are efficient for modern requirements, and supposing that if not actually at war we were, at all events, in the war zone, we might be in a very awkward position indeed, if we had to depend upon sea transport over thousands of miles for the replacement of our aeroplanes which might be lost by accident or through war. The suggestion made by Senator Gardiner, that more consideration should be given to the question of manufacturing aeroplane engines in Australia is an excellent one. I realize also that it is advisable for the Government to have available a certain

force for policing the air, just as to-day we employ policemen and other officials to look after and deal with law breakers. In urging the wisdom of subsidizing civil aviators and the manufacture of aeroplanes in Australia, I remind honorable senators that Germany's success in so quickly assembling all its forces for war purposes was due to the fact that the men engaged in occupations which might be extremely useful in war time, were properly looked after in time of peace, as for example, all those men employed in chemical research in connexion with the dye industry. Their services were of immense commercial value to Germany prior to the war, and during the war they were very quickly organized for the manufacture of chemicals for high explosives and other purposes. I hope, therefore that the Government will give this matter their attention at a very early date.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [11.47].—I desire to say a few words to the amendment submitted by Senator J. D. Millen, that consideration of the Bill be postponed until after the return of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) from the Imperial Conference. Senator Millen made a very sensible suggestion. One very important reason why it should be given effect is that the Prime Minister in another place has announced that only the Tariff will be dealt with during his absence. I take it his absence will commence from Wednesday next, and that being so, why should the Senate be called upon now to deal with a measure of this character? A definite promise made by the Prime Minister should be held sacred. The Senate should not do anything that might, possibly, cause the Prime Minister embarrassment, and give some irreverent people an opportunity to scoff at his promise.

Senator FAIRBAIRN.—All promises are sacred.

Senator GARDINER.—I agree with the honorable senator, but I remind him that quite a number of persons in this country, if they have the opportunity, will scoff at the Prime Minister, and to some extent, in an attempt to belittle this representative assembly, they will direct their criticism at members of Parliament generally. I suggest, therefore, that the suggestion made by Senator Millen would meet the case quite well. For my part, I should take good care,

in the event of a division, not to do anything that would harass the Government, by taking the business out of their hands. We know what trouble this caused in another place, and so we should be on the alert here, and not take any risks. But if Senator Millen's amendment be carried, I sincerely hope the Minister will not take it so seriously as somebody else took something else somewhere else. There is, as I have shown, sound reason for the postponement of the Bill. The Prime Minister, on his return from the Conference, may be in a position to give us up-to-date information on the question of aerial defence. Of course, it will be secret. No one will know anything about it but himself; but he will have the information, and with the utmost secrecy he may communicate it to the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce), and, then, perhaps, we may have presented to us a measure for air defence even more effective than the Bill now under discussion. This point, I suggest, is well worthy of consideration. I realize that in the matter of war preparations, the inner circle of a Cabinet frequently possesses information not available to the rest of the community. I hardly like to venture the statement, because it is one that may be easily denied, and is not capable of proof in an assembly like this; but the thought having occurred to me, I should like to say that when Senator Pearce and other Ministers visited Great Britain in 1911 or thereabouts, they were advised of the view held by certain high authorities that Germany's preparations for war would be complete in 1914, and that when they were complete, war might be expected. If this statement is anywhere near the mark, I would be satisfied if certain people of authority in this country had valuable information enabling them, we will say, to address themselves to this important question of the defence of Australia. I take it that when he returns to Australia in October or November next, the Prime Minister may be in a position to advise us upon a more perfect defence scheme. Perhaps he will—hardly as passenger's luggage—bring us some machinery for the manufacture of aeroplanes. At all events, he may have the specifications by means of which we may improve the present scheme.

I realize, of course, that in urging the postponement of this measure I am possibly up against the fact—I think the

Minister hinted it—that a great deal of the money has already been spent, because we voted it on the last Estimates. But I was rather amused that the Minister should endeavour to put that aspect before the Senate. It is quite true that the money was voted by Parliament, and, therefore, the Government were entitled to spend a portion or the whole of it; but honorable senators, I think, were not aware, when the Estimates were rushed through at the last moment, that this would be done.

Senator WILSON.—It is one of the tricks of the trade to rush Estimates through, is it not?

Senator GARDINER.—I suppose it is.

Senator WILSON.—I am putting the question to you because you ought to know.

Senator GARDINER.—I can assure the honorable senator that when I was on the Ministerial bench it was always repugnant to me to hurry Estimates of Expenditure through Parliament, because I realized that their consideration was the last opportunity that the representatives of the people had of controlling the purse.

Senator WILSON.—We have not much of a grip on it now.

Senator GARDINER.—Very little, unfortunately.

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator cannot say that there was not ample opportunity for debate on the last Estimates. No honorable senator was asked to curtail his remarks.

Senator GARDINER.—The Minister speaks as if we were not then sitting an extra day, and crowding on the hours to dispose of the business. Indeed, we were compelled to sit all night.

Senator PEARCE.—That was not the position when these Estimates were under consideration.

Senator GARDINER.—Possibly not; but I repeat that there was not ample opportunity for the discussion of the Estimates. The Minister cannot get away from the fact that when he was introducing the Estimates for the Defence Department, it was his duty to give a definite and detailed statement of this proposed expenditure.

Senator PEARCE.—I drew particular attention to it in the Senate.

Senator WILSON.—I do not think it was a question of not having sufficient time for debate, but rather that the details required were not supplied.

Senator GARDINER.—The Minister now says that he drew particular attention to this expenditure. I leave it to honorable senators themselves whether he left an impression in their minds that expenditure on a scheme of this magnitude was to be confined to £500,000. He did not in mine. This is only the initial expenditure of a large sum of money, because the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) practically agrees that £500,000 per annum is only the estimated cost of the Air Defence Branch he is bringing into existence. I suppose it will be only a little while before £1,000,000, or even £2,000,000, will be required; and the Minister, in starting a scheme of that character—because he practically started it on last year's Estimates—will have to carry the responsibility. I am not excusing myself by saying that I should have been informed, because I should have been sufficiently alert when the Estimates were under discussion to have demanded a detailed explanation. On the next occasion I trust that I shall be alert enough to seek an explanation on every item. After the estimated expenditure has been passed, we are informed that the money has been expended—I say it advisedly—upon a branch of the Service that, with the exception of the Minister for Defence, other honorable senators know very little about.

Senator FOSTER.—He said that very little of the money would be expended this year, but he qualified that later when he thought there was a possibility of losing his Bill.

Senator GARDINER.—Very little time remains, as the financial year ends in June. The proposal to postpone the Bill appeals to me, and I think the Minister for Defence will be well advised if he accepts the amendment moved by Senator J. D. Millen, because, after all, it is only a matter of a few months. If a portion of the money voted has been expended, as was quite justified, it will not interfere with the arrangement he has to make for the establishment of an Air Defence Force. Everything is favorable to the further postponement of the Bill. I have been addressing myself to this question at greater length than I intended, to give an opportunity for the mover of the amendment to be present. I

do not intend to debate the matter at further length, but am prepared to let the question go to a vote, if necessary.

Senator NEWLAND.—The honorable senator would not like to embarrass the Government.

Senator GARDINER.—I certainly would not, because the Government have made my position such that that would be the last thing that I would think of. I do not think that I would get the same consideration from any other Government.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Truth will out.

Senator GARDINER.—There are times when one has to acknowledge the fact that the Government is satisfactorily conducting the affairs of the country, but these occasions are rare. I am not looking for such opportunities, but on this particular question I hardly think there is an honorable senator who will not agree that it is inadvisable to go on with two Air Services. I have referred to the possibility of the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) returning from the Imperial Conference with important information.

Senator WILSON.—The honorable senator will realize that, after passing the Estimates, we must support the Minister in all the commitments the Government have made up to the end of this financial year.

Senator GARDINER.—Unquestionably. This is not the time to question a Minister on the expenditure of the money; but I realize that Senator Wilson's chief desire in this Senate is to get behind the Government whenever they need his support.

Senator WILSON.—I do not know who will wake up first, the honorable senator or the Government. I have greater freedom of action than the honorable senator.

Senator GARDINER.—I am very glad to hear that, because I was trained in parliamentary work in a pretty stiff school, and I always consider it my duty to be behind the Government that I am elected to support, particularly when they are in danger. The Minister for Defence will remember in the early days, when I was a supporter of his, the circumstances surrounding the proposal embodied in a Bill he passed to prevent certain people from selling war medals.

Senator WILSON.—It is a question of supporting this Government until there is a better one to follow.

Senator GARDINER.—As I believe the Minister for Defence is anxious to conclude the debate, I do not wish to detain the Senate at greater length.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) —[12.5].—Several arguments against the Bill have been brought forward during the discussion on the second reading, and one that has been given some prominence is that of economy. That has been submitted as a strong reason why we should not go on with the Bill; but, after placing £500,000 on the Estimates for this particular Service, it became absolutely necessary to establish an Air Branch to give effect to the vote which was carried. Not only in our Australian newspapers, but in those published in other parts of the world, information is given to the effect that, as a nation, we are standing in an exceedingly precarious position. If we look back to the period before the great war, which has happily been brought to a satisfactory termination, we must realize that the position then was not as serious as it is to-day. We cannot say, and we dare not even attempt to prophesy, what will take place. In these circumstances it is unreasonable to suggest that one of the most useful and necessary adjuncts to our defence scheme should be held over until a more convenient time, because to postpone it would endanger that which is primal in connexion with the nation's safety. If a nation's safety is endangered, its wealth, happiness, and prosperity are of little value. If we look at this proposition from the stand-point of the danger which surrounds us, and the condition of affairs in the world generally, we must admit that, if there is one arm of defence that should be more active than another, it is the eyes of the Army and Navy. As the aeroplane was so useful in assisting in scouting during the great war, an efficient Air Defence Force should be created before anything else; and in connexion with the arguments adduced on the question of economy, it must be admitted that aeroplanes would be much more economical than Dreadnoughts. Scattered as the Australian people are over a very wide area, and difficult as it may be to

move our naval vessels around our lengthy coastline, there is always the possibility of being assailed at any point, and the establishment of a well-organized and equipped Air Force should have first consideration. Even the keenest pacifist could not object to the proposal, because to be forewarned is to be forearmed. If we neglect to use the opportunities we possess of acquiring knowledge that is absolutely necessary, and if we endanger our security, we are leaving ourselves absolutely at the mercy of a marauding nation which may desire to attack us. Apart altogether from the question that we may or may not be attacked, the international conditions are such that, although we may not actually be involved in a struggle with any nation, we may easily be swept into the vortex of conflict. In whatever direction we may stay our hands, this important problem should have immediate consideration. A little while ago we passed a skeleton measure to create such a Force as this, and it is only within the last few months that statutory rules and regulations, ten times more voluminous than the Bill itself, were adopted. For the first time we are creating what we consider necessary for effective defence, and, before we have commenced, the cry of economy is raised. But all true economy depends on whether the organization is efficient. If it is inefficient, it is not true economy.

Senator WILSON.—This is not the occasion on which to discuss economy; that should be done when the Estimates are under consideration.

Senator SENIOR.—I admit that; but, seeing that the arguments advanced may have some weight with honorable senators, and that inadequate defence may jeopardize the well-being of Australia, we have to discuss it now. Of what use would be our prosperity, the wealth we accumulate, or the happiness we so much seek, if, after all, any nation, however small, could deprive us of the privileges we now enjoy? As a nation, we should at least provide the means to enable us to be apprised at the earliest possible moment of the approach of enemy forces. It is for this reason, and not because I desire to see £500,000 expended, that I shall sup-

port the Bill, rather than the expenditure involved in constructing another vessel such as the *Australia*.

Senator GARDINER.—Was the expenditure on the *Australia* justified?

Senator SENIOR.—I thank the honorable senator for the interjection, as his suggestion helps to justify expenditure on a branch of the Service that is admittedly weak. To the eternal honor of Australia we have demonstrated how rapidly our troops can be made from what is, from a military point of view, the rawest of material. The Australian has given evidence of splendid valour, and has shown how loyal he is at heart not only to his own country, but to the Empire of which Australia is a part. It would, therefore, ill become Australia, at such a juncture as the present, to neglect to provide against one means by which an enemy might cloud our vision and approach so rapidly that we should not know of his coming. I do not wish in any sense to be an alarmist, but I do say that there is need for careful consideration of every arm of defence that will serve to make Australia safe. The argument is advanced by some that we should pass this measure because the money required to give it effect has already been voted by Parliament. That argument is not sound, but it is still safe to say that the contingency upon which the money was voted six months ago is more imminent to-day. I am so impressed by the present condition of international affairs that I should be prepared to-day to vote for an expenditure of £500,000 for this purpose, and, indeed, double that sum, more readily than I did six months ago. The arguments which justified the voting of the money six months ago have been immeasurably strengthened by the present condition of international affairs. We should not close our eyes and consider that we are safe because the wide ocean sweeps around Australia. We should keep in touch with what is passing around us, and, if we do so, we shall feel that, in the matter of defence, the essential thing is to be ready, and not necessarily to be aggressive.

I have carefully gone through the provisions of the Bill. It may appear simple to the Minister for Defence, who

understands the position, and merely the A B C to military members of the Senate who have had practical experience of the operations of an Air Force. The Bill, however, is not a very simple measure when we take into consideration the fact that it is related to many other measures, and that, in its consideration, some regard should be had for the Imperial Air Force. Its provisions will require careful study in Committee. I see no justification for the postponement of the measure. I think, on the contrary, that we should accelerate its passage, whilst we should not fail to make it as perfect as we can.

The wealth and possibilities of Australia and all we enjoy of peace and freedom rest upon our safety. If we are unable to defend ourselves, our tenure of this country depends merely upon how soon some other nation may decide to take it from us.

Question—That the words proposed to be left out be left out (Senator J. D. MILLEN's amendment)—put. The Senate divided.

Ayes	3
Noes	23

Majority	20
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AYES.

Elliott, H. E.
Gardiner, A.

Teller:
Millen, J. D.

NOES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.
Benny, B.
Buzacott, R.
Cox, C. F.
Crawford, T. W.
de Largie, H.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.
Duncan, W. L.
Fairbairn, G.
Foster, G. M.
Henderson, G.
Millen, E. D.

Newland, J.
Payne, H. J. M.
Pearce, G. F.
Pratten, H. E.
Reid, M.
Rowell, J.
Russell, E. J.
Senior, W.
Vardon, E. C.
Wilson, R. V.

Teller:
Earle, J.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [12.27].—I wish to reply briefly to the criticism that has been passed upon the Bill. I desire first of all to make a slight correction of what I said in moving the second reading of the measure. I gave the Senate some information about the Air Board, and when I was asked whether its establishment would involve any additional expenditure, I said that the only additional expenditure I knew of was an allowance

of £100 per annum to the finance officer. I find that I overstated the amount of his additional remuneration. The allowance made to him is only £75.

Senator J. D. MILLEN.—Does the Minister mean to say that the total emolument of the officer is only £575 per year?

Senator PEARCE.—I do not at the moment know just what his total salary is, but he is to receive an additional sum of £75 per annum because of the extra duties thrown upon him as a member of the Air Board.

Senator PRATTEN.—Can the Minister give the information he promised about the number of aeroplanes.

Senator PEARCE.—Before I sit down, I shall give all the information asked for. Senator Gardiner, when speaking on the Bill, said—

Is it a fair thing to ask the country to commit itself to enormous expenditure for air defence?

The honorable senator also said that "the world is waiting for a lead in disarmament." I quite agree with that statement; but when the honorable senator refers to this particular Bill as one proposing enormous expenditure, and then asks that we should give a lead in disarmament, I am justified in directing his attention to some figures respecting naval and military expenditure. Great Britain, in policing as she does about one-half of the world, is spending, I understand, 10 per cent. of her revenue. The United States of America, that has not the responsibility of policing vast territories, is spending, I understand, 12 per cent. of her national income. And another country, Japan, that has no colonies beyond a few island possessions, and no responsibility for mandated territories, and for occupied countries, such as Great Britain has, is spending 33 per cent. of her national income. In view of these figures, the lead in disarmament should not come from a country like Australia, which is spending a comparatively insignificant sum, but from those countries which are spending such huge sums as I have indicated. We hope that the lead will come from those countries. During the course of the debate, I was asked a question as to the number of machines there are in Australia. The Air Board has now in its possession machines as under, for units provided on the first

year's programme for the Australian Air Force:—

	Establishment.	Spares Held.
D.H. 9's ..	22	6
D.H. 9 Ay's ..	8	21
S.E. 5 Ay's ..	27	8
Avros ..	12	36
Sopwith Pups ..	3	8
	<hr/> 72	<hr/> 79

The nine flying-boats, and twelve ships' seaplanes required to complete the units provided for, will be ordered without delay. The proportion of ground to flying personnel in the Australian Air Force will be as follows:—

	Ground.	Flying.
Officers ..	1	to 3
Officers and other ranks ..	9	to 1

The proposed establishment provides for aeroplane squadrons being equipped with twelve machines, and the seaplane and flying-boat squadrons with six machines each. The reserve considered necessary is 50 per cent. of the total establishment of the unit. The following machines are now in our possession, and have been allotted to service units:—

1. On the Establishment—

D.H. 9's ..	16
D.H. 9 Ay's ..	8
S.E. 5 Ay's ..	24
	<hr/> 48

2. In Reserve to these units—

D.H. 9's ..	6
D.H. 9 Ay's ..	21
S.E. Ay's ..	8
	<hr/> 35

The following machines are in our possession, and have been allotted to No. 1 Flying Training School:—

D.H. 9's ..	6
S.E. 5 Ay's ..	3
Avros ..	12
Sopwith Pups ..	3
	<hr/> 24

And the following training machines are in reserve:—

Avros ..	36
Sopwith Pups ..	8
	<hr/> 44

This makes the total of machines in our possession:—

D.H. 9's ..	28
D.H. 9 Ay's ..	29
S.E. 5 Ay's ..	35
Avros ..	48
Sopwith Pups ..	11
	<hr/> 151

It will be seen from the above that our reserves in D.H. 9's, and S.E. 5 Ay's, are below 50 per cent.; those for D.H. 9 Ay's are above 50 per cent. This is owing to the fact that we must make the best use of the machines given to us by the Imperial Government; and it is not proposed that we shall purchase more D.H. 9's and S.E. 5 Ay's, as these machines are obsolete in the Royal Air Force, and should be replaced with new types when reserves get so low as to warrant the re-equipment of these units. That is not to say that these machines are obsolete for certain purposes, nor that the Air Force, which will be an effective arm, is equipped with obsolete machines, because the other machines are up-to-date. In the meantime, as the reserves get low in any squadron, a Flight might be replaced with D.H. 9 Ay's. In this way we can keep somewhere near our 50 per cent. reserve for service units, make the best use of our machines, and save a certain amount of expenditure. It will be noted that in the training units we have ample reserves, but in these units in time of peace the reserves required will probably be much greater than those required in service units, and a much larger reserve than 50 per cent. of the establishment must be maintained in the preliminary training machines, that is to say, Avros. In this case, we are well provided for from the gift equipment. The general principle being worked on, however, is 50 per cent. reserve of establishment in service units, and at least 200 per cent. in reserves in preliminary training machines. At the moment we have a reserve of 300 per cent. in these machines, and experience may show it to be necessary to maintain such a reserve. In ordering flying-boats and ships' seaplanes for service units, the principle of a 50 per cent. reserve has been maintained, that is to say: Flying-boats—Unit, 6; Reserve, 3; making a total of 9. Ship's Seaplanes—Unit, 6; Reserve, 3; making a total of 9; with an

additional 3 Seaplanes for finishing training, or 12 altogether.

The officers may be set down as follow:—

Total Officers.	
Wing Commanders	6
Squadron Leaders	18
Flight Lieutenants	40
Flying Officers	81
Under instruction (Cadets, &c.) ..	38
<hr/>	
Officers	183
Other ranks	1,046
<hr/>	
Total	1,229

Ground Personnel.

	Officers.
A.I.F. Head-Quarters	6
Wing Head-Quarters	12
Fighter Squadrons	8
Corps Recruiting Squadrons ..	..
Flying Boats	5
Seaplanes	3
No. 1 F.T.S.	5
No. 1 Aircraft Depôt	18
Liaison Officer,	1
<hr/>	
	58

The relation of ground *personnel* to flying *personnel* may be thus summarized:—

(a) Permanent officers—ground officers, 58; flying officers, 125. (b) Permanent officers and other ranks—ground *personnel*, 58; other ranks, 1,046; total, 1,104; flying *personnel*, 125. Citizen Forces:—(a) Officers—ground officers, 10; flying officers, 30. (b) Officers and other ranks—ground *personnel*, 292; flying *personnel*, 30. The total Permanent and Citizen Forces are:—(a) Officers—ground, 68; flying, 155. (b) Officers and other ranks—ground, 292; others, 1,104; making a total of 1,396. The proportion of officers, therefore, is 1 ground to 3 flying; and of officers and other ranks, 9 ground to 1 flying.

Senator Elliott in his criticism said that in this Bill we were laying down a war basis, and that the Air Force proposed to be provided is equivalent to what we had in the Australian Imperial Force. I have had the figures looked up, and I find that they do not bear out his statement. We had with the Australian Imperial Force, one wing headquarters, four squadrons, and one repair section in training, and we used the Royal Air Force depôts. That is to say the Australian Air Units which were on active

service had no depôts, but used the Australian Imperial Force depôts. Under this Bill we propose to establish one flying training school and one Air Craft depot, including the repairs, so that the comparison works out at four squadrons against one squadron here. Upon service with the Army we had four squadrons, one of which was with the corps. We had none with the Navy. Under this scheme we are proposing the same strength, namely, four squadrons, two of which will be permanent, and two citizen squadrons. We are proposing to establish a flying boat squadron, and a seaplane squadron with the Navy, which we did not have during the war. The *personnel* of the Air Squadron during the war was over 500 officers, and 2,500 officers and other ranks. What we now propose is a force of 160 officers and 1,500 officers and other ranks. Of this number 145 will be permanent officers, and 1,100 officers and other ranks.

Senator ELLIOTT.—But this is only the commencement of the scheme. I believe that the Minister intends to increase it.

Senator PEARCE.—That was not the point of Senator Elliott's criticism. His statement was that this scheme was upon a war basis, and it is that statement to which I am now replying. Then it must be remembered that during the war we did not have with our Forces an Air Force which was proportionate to those forces. Our Air Force was not at any time proportionate to the forces we had in the field, and to a very large extent we used the Royal Air Forces supply and repair depôts. During his speech upon this Bill, Senator Elliott dealt with the same matters in regard to the supersession of officers as he dealt with when he was discussing the Defence Bill. He will not, therefore, deem it discourtesy on my part if I do not reply to his observations, seeing that I have already done so. Senator Pratten contended that the Bill is merely a skeleton measure. His statement is correct, because the Bill must be read in conjunction with two Acts passed by this Parliament, namely, the Defence Act, and the Naval Defence Act. But it is not advisable to repeat in this measure all the sections of those Acts which apply to the Air Force. In this Bill we incorporate all the sections of those Acts which are applicable to that Force.

Senator Pearce.

Senator PRATTEN.—The Minister has missed the point which I made. What I said was that we had not a prospectus of what is proposed.

Senator PEARCE.—The honorable senator said that this was a skeleton Bill.

Senator PRATTEN.—In that it lacks the details which have now been given.

Senator PEARCE.—It is a skeleton Bill, because it is not convenient or advisable to re-print in it all those sections of our Defence Acts which are applicable to the Air Force.

Senator PRATTEN.—My point was that the honorable gentleman in his first speech failed to give us the particulars which he has now supplied.

Senator PEARCE.—Then we are quite in agreement. Senator Duncan raised an important point regarding the type of seaplane which is being obtained. I can only assure him that any seaplane or other plane that we may secure in the future will be of the latest and most up-to-date type. We have an officer attached to the Air Ministry, who will look after our interests in that regard. Senator Fairbairn raised the question of the expenditure which will be involved under this Bill. He is satisfied that there is no extravagance in the proposals of the Government provided that there be no increase in the expenditure, and that we save what we can during the balance of the financial year, so that when we come to review the position next year we may be able to reduce the expenditure. I find that the position to-day is that of the £500,000 which has been voted for this scheme we shall not spend more than £400,000, and the probability is that we shall not even spend that sum. I can definitely assure the Senate that there will be £100,000 of the vote unexpended at the end of the financial year.

Senator PRATTEN.—But to carry out the scheme which has been foreshadowed by the honorable gentleman will require an expenditure of £500,000.

Senator PEARCE.—I do not claim any particular credit for the saving of that £100,000, because, owing to various circumstances over which we have had no control, the establishment is being given effect to at a later date in the financial year than we anticipated.

Senator PRATTEN.—But the establishment mentioned by the honorable senator will cost about £500,000 during a normal year.

Senator PEARCE.—No; it will cost more than that in the full financial year. I think the amount will be nearer £600,000. This £500,000 was for certain expenditure on equipment, and also for the establishment for a portion of the year, and it is obvious that the same establishment for a whole year it will cost more. The control, however, will still be in the hands of the Senate when we re-assemble, because the Senate will be able to determine how much we are to spend in the next financial year. Nothing done this year will prejudice us in that regard.

Senator PRATTEN.—The Minister has given certain particulars with regard to the *personnel*. When that *personnel* is brought into being, the Minister now says it will require £600,000 for its upkeep.

Senator PEARCE.—Well, more than £500,000.

Senator PRATTEN.—So that by approving of the *personnel* we shall be, in effect, committing this Parliament to an expenditure of more than £500,000 a year.

Senator PEARCE.—I do not know how I can make myself clear to the honorable senator. I have just said that it is not so, and that all Parliament is committed to is the setting aside of £500,000 in this financial year for the Air Force. I said that owing to the late period at which this establishment is being appointed we shall not spend more than £400,000 of that money, and that when the next Estimates are presented to Parliament they will be for the establishment which we assume will then have been completed. That will obviously be some figure higher than £500,000, and I should not think it would be more than £600,000. If Parliament, in view of the circumstances that are then before it, decides that it is not prepared to spend that amount of money, Parliament will be free to take that course. It will mean ultimately simply reducing the *personnel* and the establishment.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Will you not have appointed officers who cannot be dismissed until they are forty years of age?

Senator PEARCE.—They can be dismissed at any time. There is nothing to prevent a Government from retrenching at any time it sees fit.

Senator Newland spoke of the necessity for a superannuation scheme. While I hold this office no one would be more

happy than I should be if such a scheme could be passed through Parliament. It is the intention of the Government at the earliest possible opportunity to ask Parliament to agree to such a scheme. That scheme has been drawn up, and is now before the Treasury for their consideration, because it has a very important financial aspect. It will mean that a considerable sum of money must be found by the country, even under a contributory scheme, and, therefore, it has to be seriously considered by the Treasury, but as soon as possible Parliament will be asked to express its opinion on the question.

Senator NEWLAND.—Can you say whether that scheme will be linked up with the general superannuation scheme for the Public Service?

Senator PEARCE.—Yes, it is a general superannuation scheme for the Public Service, and for the military also.

Senator ELLIOTT.—Can we have copies of the Air Force Act, which is embodied in this Bill, for perusal before this Bill is passed?

Senator PEARCE.—I shall endeavour to get them. Senator Newland also referred to the early age for retirement, and expressed sympathy with those who would be required to retire. The fact of such an early age being fixed has already been taken into consideration in determining the rates of pay. Rates of pay for these officers are considerably higher, especially in the lower ranks, than the rates of pay for officers of similar rank in the Military Forces. They have been based on the rates of pay for officers in the submarine branch of the naval service. That applies particularly to the lower ranks, and this fact is regarded as some compensation for the earlier retirement.

Senator Foster suggested that the Government should take practical steps to assist civil aviation. I assure the Senate that we are doing this as fast as we can, consistent with having a concerted plan. It is obvious that we could waste a lot of money if we said to every company that came to us with a proposition connected with civil aviation, "We will give you what you ask." I have had one proposition put before me that a firm to carry mails in one part of Queensland should be subsidized to the extent of £58,000 per annum. For that sum we could buy the machines, pay the pilots, and run the ser-

vice for the whole year. That is to say, they are asking us to put up, in the shape of an annual subsidy, not only the cost of the service, but also all the capital required to start it going. Any Government that, under the guise of assisting civil aviation, agreed to hand over such a subsidy might make itself extremely popular for a little while, but before long Parliament would have something to say about the way Ministers were scattering the money about.

Senator REID.—What part of Queensland was that company to operate in?

Senator PEARCE.—I do not wish to indicate that. I merely mention the case as a proposition put up to us. There are companies in this country that we are desirous of assisting to the utmost on sound lines. One of them has already received from the Government assistance which has enabled it to keep going. We are also assisting them in preparing surveys of aerial routes and landing grounds; but in many cases this means the acquisition of land, and it is not desirable at this juncture to say too plainly what we are doing in that regard, because land values have an uncanny knack of going up when the Government is known to be in the market as a purchaser.

On the question of manufacture in Australia, negotiations have been entered into recently, and a proposal which was placed before the Government is now before the Air Board, from a Sydney firm, for the manufacture, not of engines, but of machines in Australia, of Australian timber. I am assured by the representative of this company that they have had exhaustive tests made of Australian timber, and that weight for weight, and size for size, the Australian timber has given 20 per cent. better results than the spruce which is generally used in the aeroplanes made overseas. If that is so, it is very satisfactory, and we shall do all we can to assist that or any other company in any way within our power consistent with proper regard for the finances. We cannot be expected to squander money.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Did the company mention what kind of Australian timber they were using?

Senator PEARCE.—They have not disclosed that information. Senator Foster raised the question of the efficiency of the gift machines. I have already explained that some of them are obsolete for fighting purposes, but there are sufficient of

them absolutely effective for fighting purposes to arm our establishment.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 agreed to.

Progress reported.

PAPER.

The following paper was presented:—

Public Service Act.—Promotion of F. Saleeba, Attorney-General's Department.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

PUBLIC SERVICE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 13th April (*vide* page 7367), on motion by Senator RUSSELL—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [2.30].—In view of the importance of this measure, it would have been as well if the Minister, instead of proceeding with its second reading, had merely introduced it, and allowed members of the Public Service, who certainly are the most interested parties, full opportunity to peruse it and supply honorable senators with information as to its probable effect on the Service. Naturally they possess information which it would be almost impossible for any honorable senator, not closely identified with the Public Service, to have. The Bill is essentially a machinery measure. Frequently in this Senate, I have complained of the tendency to legislate by means of regulations, but, as I scan this measure, it appears to me that in it are to be found provisions for many matters that could very well have been dealt with by regulation, while, on the other hand, more important matters which might well have been provided for are overlooked: Interested people might be justified in saying that they have been deliberately omitted, because the minor matters to which I have referred are mentioned in the measure.

Senator RUSSELL.—There is plenty of room in the Bill for regulations to cover many minor matters.

Senator GARDINER.—No doubt, but the point I am making is that it contains provision for matters that are almost insignificant and which could more properly be dealt with by departmental

regulation, while more important matters are left out. Apart altogether from this there are one or two clauses to which I desire to refer, and at the outset I direct attention to sub-clause 2 of clause 9, which states—

In the making of appointments under the provisions of this section, preference shall be given, other things being equal, to returned soldiers or sailors.

I should like to ask why the words "other things being equal" are used?

Senator PAYNE.—What would the honorable senator have?

Senator GARDINER.—I want to know why there is this back door provision to evade giving preference to returned soldiers or sailors?

Senator RUSSELL.—The Government might wish to appoint a wireless expert, and there might not be one among the returned soldiers or sailors.

Senator GARDINER.—It is very easy for the Minister to furnish a reason why the clause should stand, but it is so loosely drafted that, given a Minister not favourable to the principle of preference to returned soldiers, it would be wide enough to suit his purpose.

Senator RUSSELL.—A Minister will not have that power. Appointments will be made by the head of a Department, and there will be the right of appeal to the Board.

Senator FOSTER.—I take it that "other things being equal" means that the best man gets the job.

Senator GARDINER.—As the Minister has stated, the question of appointing an expert in some particular business might arise, and so, on these grounds, the words "other things being equal" may be retained; but I venture to say that there will be no such difficulty about the constitution of the Board of Commissioners, for which men of character, capacity, and fitness, but not necessarily experts in some particular business, will be required. I usually pride myself that there is not much of the hypocrite about me, and so when I say that I think returned soldiers and sailors are being fooled by this pretence at preference in employment they will know what I mean. The sooner they realize that they have to take their chances with the rest of the community, and that fitness alone will be the qualification for a position in the Public Service, the better it will be. I

am not afraid that, given a fair chance, they will not be able to prove their fitness for any post that may be made vacant; but I protest at this pretended preference, for it is only so much pretence so long as this loop-hole for the evasion of the principle is retained in the Bill. In connexion with the appointment of the Board, there is a first-class opportunity to establish this principle, but I have noticed that usually in appointments of this nature, preference is given to returned soldiers for positions that involve a good deal of hard work and little pay, and for positions with large pay and little work it is quite another matter. Everything will depend upon the interpretation to be placed on the words "other things being equal" in the sub-clause to which I have referred.

Senator RUSSELL.—Some very fair positions, from Judges down to messenger boys, have been given to returned soldiers recently in Rabaul.

Senator GARDINER.—I have no doubt that returned soldiers will be sent to Rabaul, and that they appreciate this preference; but it is merely a pretence to say that the principle is established while the words "other things being equal" remain in the clause.

Senator WILSON.—That is more than your party did in the Sydney City Council.

Senator GARDINER.—I invite the honorable senator to go through the parks and other public thoroughfares of Sydney to see what splendid work has been done there by the City Council. They have done far more during the time they have been there than was done in the previous forty years by the old "fogies" who are represented by the honorable senator.

Senator ROWELL.—And there is a nice overdraft now.

Senator GARDINER.—I do not want to be drawn off the track by these interjections; but I may say that as regards this principle of preference, returned soldiers have no better friends than the Labour members in the Sydney City Council.

Let me come back to the consideration of the constitution of the Board of Commissioners. This will be a highly-paid body, and, therefore, men of great capacity and integrity will be required to fill the positions. I am not an opponent of good pay. I believe that if a man is called upon to shoulder a large amount

of responsibility, and to display marked ability in the discharge of his duties, he should receive a remuneration commensurate with his services; and here, I repeat, is a splendid chance to establish the principle of preference to returned soldiers.

Senator SENIOR.—There is nothing to preclude returned soldiers from receiving those appointments.

Senator GARDINER.—Nothing except the social or political pull exerted by candidates, or favoritism on the part of those responsible for the appointments.

Senator SENIOR.—That is not in the Bill.

Senator GARDINER.—No; and it cannot very well be put into it. What I am complaining about is the apparent discrimination in the matter of preference between what may be regarded as the highly-paid posts and the ordinary positions in the Public Service.

Senator DUNCAN.—If you move to exclude the words "other things being equal," I will support you.

Senator GARDINER.—I venture to say that if I did the Government whip would crack, and the honorable senator knows that he would have to get behind the Government. We all know what happened in another place recently.

I turn now to clause 78. Sub-clause 1 provides—

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, a returned soldier whose name is enrolled in the prescribed register for temporary employment shall, if competent for the work required, be considered for temporary employment in priority to any person who is not a returned soldier.

Senator RUSSELL.—That covers everybody.

Senator GARDINER.—Does it cover appointments to the Board?

Senator RUSSELL.—I should say so.

Senator GARDINER.—Because, if it does, we should strike out the words I have complained of in clause 9. Sub-clauses 2 and 3 state—

(2) Upon report from the Chief Officer that a returned soldier temporarily employed has satisfactorily performed his duties, the Board may extend his employment for such time as temporary assistance is still required.

(3) Where the employment of a returned soldier has been terminated owing to temporary assistance not being further required, he shall be eligible for further employment at any time after the termination of his previous temporary employment.

Clause 79 reads—

(1) In the making of appointments to the Commonwealth Service from among persons who have successfully passed the prescribed examination, the Board shall give preference to returned soldiers.

Senator WILSON.—That is definite enough.

Senator GARDINER.—Yes, for ordinary appointments, but for special cases, such as appointments to the Board of Commissioners, there is room for serious doubt.

Senator WILSON.—Which I think you are manufacturing.

Senator GARDINER.—If a doubt exists in my mind as to the interpretation of a clause, it is my duty to state the position, to see if other honorable senators agree with me. If the position is as the Minister states, there can be no objection to striking out the words "other things being equal" in sub-clause 2 of clause 9, so that in the making of appointments to the Public Service, preference shall be given definitely to returned soldiers and sailors. I venture to say that out of the 450,000 men who went from this country to the war there are many capable of filling every position in the Public Service of the Commonwealth.

Senator SENIOR.—We are not doubting that.

Senator GARDINER.—I know; but we are being asked to pass a Bill which, so far as ordinary positions are concerned, establishes the principle of preference to returned soldiers, while for the highly-paid positions this principle may be ignored. The clause is worded in such a manner that, to me, this principle of preference appears to be merely a pretence. The time has gone by for showing preference to any section of the community.

Senator DUNCAN.—Including preference to unionists?

Senator GARDINER.—Preference to unionists stands by itself.

Senator DUNCAN.—Unionists are a part of the community.

Senator GARDINER.—They are the whole; at least they comprise the section which does the real work. The question of preference is in this position: The Government have provided one set of conditions for one section, and other conditions for another.

Senator DUNCAN.—The soldier by his energy and self-sacrifice has been the means of conserving everything that the unionists have won.

Senator GARDINER.—I agree with that. But it must be remembered that preference to unionists does not shut out any one, because every man can participate in it if he joins a union.

Senator WILSON.—That is compulsory unionism.

Senator GARDINER.—Not at all. I am showing the difference between preference to unionists, and the so-called preference that is offered to returned soldiers. Preference to unionists leaves the positions open to every man in the community, but preference to returned soldiers deprives men with an excellent record of being employed, and shuts out quite a number whose qualifications are in every way satisfactory. It is now nearly three years since the war terminated, and we have to consider the prospects of the young man who was, say, eighteen years of age, and could not go to the war. A public position becomes vacant, and he is nearing the age of twenty-one when he applies in competition with the returned soldier for a position. Although the returned soldier may be less efficient, less capable, and, shall I say, less worthy, he has no possible hope of success. I do not intend those remarks to be regarded as a reflection on the soldiers; but I say openly and publicly that in such an enormous number as went abroad, it was only natural that there were many who were not angels.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator is assuming that they will apply, and they may not.

Senator GARDINER.—I know enough to say that very frequently it is the man with the toughest hide and the poorest qualifications who pushes his case the furthest.

Senator WILSON.—I think that applies from the cradle to the grave.

Senator GARDINER.—I believe it does. The point I desire to make is that, under the policy of preference to unionists, no man is debarred from employment altogether. We have to take the case of a young man who was under military age at the termination of the war, and ask why he should be debarred from obtaining a public position because he has not seen active service. Why should he be opposed by a man who has rendered

glorious service at Horseferry Road for a period sufficiently long to enable him to return to Australia, and wear a soldier's medal? Why should he be debarred, as this Bill debars him? The worst shirkers, in my opinion, were those who were employed in the administrative offices at different centres, and who never risked their life, or anything else, but who returned to Australia flourishing a medal.

Senator ROWELL.—It has not always been their fault.

Senator GARDINER.—I am referring to what I term the real shirkers.

Senator ROWELL.—They had to go where they were directed.

Senator GARDINER.—I am blaming the men who went abroad, and who had no intention of fighting, if they could avoid it.

Senator ROWELL.—And there were plenty of them.

Senator GARDINER.—There were many men who took great care that they did not do any actual fighting, and who, because of their service, perhaps in a comfortable office in London, Egypt, or in France, are wearing a soldier's medal. We are dealing with the whole community.

Senator SENIOR.—I think the honorable senator's scales are weighted; that is not a true measure.

Senator GARDINER.—If preference is to be given to soldiers, justice must be done to those who were unable to go. There are many whose health prevented them from enlisting, although they were willing to fight, and their cases should be considered with those who actually saw active service. There were many apparently healthy young men who offered, but found, on visiting the medical officer, that their physical fitness debarred them from enlisting. I ask honorable senators if they consider it absolutely fair that men placed in such a position, and who were not permitted to enlist, irrespective of their capacity, should be treated in this way? I know that some honorable senators will say that I am using a double-edged argument, and that if we are going to have preference to soldiers, there must be preference for the higher offices as well as those of the lower grade.

Senator WILSON.—We all agree with that.

Senator RUSSELL.—It ought to be uniform.

Senator GARDINER.—I believe that in a growing community such as ours the ex-soldier will find himself at a great disadvantage—and very soon—by this pretended preference; because, after all, that is what it is, and the sooner we realize that the soldier having done his share is anxious to be treated as other members of the community, the better it will be. Honorable senators can say what they like, but when a man has returned to Australia after fighting for his country, he has received a reward which cannot be taken away from him. He has the knowledge that when the occasion arose he was prepared to face danger, and even death.

Senator FOSTER.—That knowledge will do little to keep his wife and family. We must also do something practical for the returned man.

Senator GARDINER.—The best thing for the Government to do would be to submit a practical proposition, as Senator Foster suggests, so that the child of an ex-soldier shall never want, because his father is out of employment. There are many returned soldiers seeking employment, and they do not wish to be regarded as paupers. Unemployment falls as much upon the ex-soldier as it does upon any one else, no matter how popular he may have been when the war was in progress. When hands are being dispensed with we do not find employers saying, "You fought for your country, and your services will be retained." In the railways, the tramways, the mines, the warehouses and workshops nothing of that kind occurs. If we are in earnest in giving preference or making provision for the soldiers, let us do it in a fair, honest, and straightforward way, so that real preference shall be given, and no man who fought for his country will ever have to seek employment or be compelled to make his children suffer. It should be the duty of the Commonwealth to find positions for these men. It is a very simple proposition, because the Australian Commonwealth provides ample scope for the useful employment of all the men in our community. I know some honorable senators would say that it would be a disastrous proposition for the Government to undertake the responsibility of finding work for all the soldiers who have returned. But it would not be nearly as costly as finding the interest on the money

borrowed to pay those soldiers and keep them in food and clothing while they were fighting.

I understand that the Government do not intend to press the second reading of this measure to a division to-day, so that honorable senators will have ample opportunity for discussing its provisions. Here is a simple little phrasing which may be likened to the straw which shows the way the stream is flowing. Clause 34 reads—

(1.) Any male person who has successfully passed any prescribed examination for admission to the Commonwealth Service, and who on the thirteenth day of September, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen, was eligible for appointment to the Commonwealth Service, shall continue to be so eligible until nine months after the declaration of Peace.

Senator WILSON.—That time has passed.

Senator RUSSELL.—The final declaration of peace will be proclaimed by the Governor-General. The point is that a regulation was passed providing that no examination should be held during the war, so that soldiers returning from abroad should have equal opportunities for permanent service with those who stayed at home.

Senator GARDINER.—Apparently, this is an old Bill, which has been dragged up for us to consider, and the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) has not taken the trouble to read it.

Senator PRATTEN.—I do not see anything the matter with that provision.

Senator GARDINER.—Very well. We are still legally at war.

Senator PRATTEN.—The sub-clause fixes a date.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is so.

Senator GARDINER.—I am glad to see that we are going to make Acts of Parliament so clear. I am going to take the risk of saying that there are not two honorable senators present who can say the date of the declaration of peace.

Senator WILSON.—Peace has not yet been proclaimed.

Senator GARDINER.—In our Acts of Parliament we should refer to specific dates and years, and not to a period “after the declaration of peace.” It is ridiculous to say, “Until nine months after the declaration of peace.” There should not be a provision to prevent eligible applicants from applying for positions in the Public Service, merely because they were

debarred from going to the war. There are men who have been filling temporary positions for years—during the whole period of the war—and who have been prevented from being permanently employed.

Senator SENIOR.—And, in some cases, doing work that was of a higher grade than that for which they were being paid.

Senator GARDINER.—Absolutely. The Government will say that they are not debarred, because the time has not expired for them to be appointed.

Senator RUSSELL.—If the honorable senator will give me a case I shall have it fully investigated.

Senator GARDINER.—Very well. I know of a young man who had been in the Public Service for some years, and who was secretary to Senator E. D. Millen when Leader of the Opposition. When a change of Government occurred, and I became Leader of the Opposition, the present Minister for Repatriation strongly recommended this young man to me, who then became my private secretary. He had been temporarily employed in the Public Service for six years, and, but for the war, would have been permanently appointed. The Government have, in an underhand way, put him out of the Service, but they pay the Leader of the Opposition an amount sufficient to cover his salary. Any one can be engaged for the position, and the salary does not enter very largely into consideration. My secretary is a young married man with a family, and should now be a permanent officer. The Minister has asked for a case and I have given him one.

Senator RUSSELL.—Was there anything to prevent you employing him if you thought well of him?

Senator GARDINER.—No; it is not a question of his employment, but one of his failure to be permanently appointed, notwithstanding his character and capacity.

Senator RUSSELL.—I think the Leader of the Opposition should be allowed to select his own private secretary.

Senator GARDINER.—The Leader of the Opposition is allowed to do that; but I am speaking of a man who was temporarily employed in the Public Service for a number of years and who cannot be made a permanent member of the Service. His present salary may be more than he would receive as a permanent Public officer, but he has lost the right to a

permanent engagement because of the war. The Public Service Commissioner will not appoint him because he did not serve at the Front, but no inquiries were made as to why. He had served in the Public Service sufficiently long to secure a permanent appointment. It is well known that a temporary employee can only be engaged for a certain time, when his service has to be broken. Men could not be made permanent officers during the war, because of the decision to make no new appointments to which I have referred.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator thinks that the services of the gentleman to whom he refers should count as service in the Public Service?

Senator GARDINER.—I do. Immediately fresh appointments were made after the war, this gentleman should have been permanently appointed to the Public Service.

Senator RUSSELL.—If a man works in Rabaul, Papua, or any of our Territories, his work there will count as service in the Commonwealth Public Service. If, for instance, the gentleman to whom the honorable senator refers had worked for five years in Papua, that would count as five years' service in the Commonwealth Public Service.

Senator WILSON.—Is the honorable senator still employing the gentleman he refers to?

Senator GARDINER.—I certainly am, and every month the Government send me a cheque to pay whomever I may be employing as private secretary. That is a roundabout way of doing the business, and I contend that to all intents and purposes the gentleman to whom I refer is an officer of this Parliament. He had been employed in the Prime Minister's Department. He was transferred to the service of Senator Millen, and from Senator Millen to me, and then the war being over the regulation which prevented him being made a public servant prevented his continuance in the Service. I say that it is a most unfair thing to take four years out of this young man's life when he might have been improving his position in the Public Service of the country, and then to put him out of the Service altogether.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator was a party to the unfairness, because he was in the Senate when the Act was passed.

Senator GARDINER.—We are all parties to everything that occurs in the Senate; but judging by the number of times I am reminded of my responsibility, I should be the most influential man in the Senate, if not in Australia. Every time I take exception to anything that is going on I am met with the excuse that I am myself responsible.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator was a member of the Government while the war was on.

Senator GARDINER.—While the war was on it was quite fair to suspend appointments until the men came back; but after they came back it is not fair to say that a man who, but for that regulation, would in the ordinary course have received a permanent appointment, should be prevented from getting one now.

Senator RUSSELL.—If the gentleman referred to passed the necessary examination for admission to the Clerical Division of the Service, he would be appointed under this Bill.

Senator GARDINER.—He passed his examination in the State of South Australia.

Senator WILSON.—Then he is good enough for anywhere else.

Senator GARDINER.—He is, absolutely. He came here from South Australia; but he was not transferred from the South Australian Public Service. The point I make is that a man under the Public Service Act cannot be continued in temporary employment beyond a certain period. He should then be given a permanent position. I am sorry to have referred to a somewhat personal matter; but I have done so in reply to a challenge to state a case in support of my contention. I say that the Public Service authorities in this case took a miserable, narrow view of the position, and had it been any one but myself for whom the gentleman to whom I have referred was working, I believe he would have received a permanent appointment in the ordinary way.

We have a great Public Service, consisting of a huge number of men and a considerable number of women. It will be an ever-growing Service, and it is important that in passing this measure we should make provision, so far as human foresight can do so, for the remedying of all the grievances of the Public Service. If half-a-dozen young men enter one branch

of the Public Service, and by their attention, ability, and qualifications, reach the highest office in that particular branch, in the ordinary course of events it will be a very great number of years before there will be any chance of their promotion. I believe that one of the disabilities of the Service is that after men reach certain positions in one branch of it, no facilities are afforded them to get into another branch in which there might be openings for their advancement. Any Service that keeps able, competent men from progressing is not doing justice to those whom it employs. We should be on the lookout for our progressive men to see that they are given fitting employment, and they should not be continued in watertight compartments because half-a-dozen of them may have reached the same grade. The whole of the Commonwealth Public Service should be open to every man in it.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is the object of the Bill.

Senator ROWELL.—What the honorable senator means is that it should be possible for an officer of the Postmaster-General's Department to be transferred to the Department of Trade and Customs.

Senator GARDINER.—That is what I mean. As a member of Parliament I have to listen to the grievances of a good many people. I take the case of an officer who has reached a particular grade, and sees no possible chance of further advancement in his particular branch. There may be another branch of the Service, in which he would have a chance of advancement; but when he makes an application for a transfer to that branch, the head of the office may say "There is no officer of your grade here, but I have men here already who understand the business of the office, and I do not think it would be of any advantage to have you transferred to my branch, because you would take a certain time to become as efficient as men of even lower grade who are already in the branch." I confess that there is much force in such an argument, but I go further and say that such an officer as I have referred to would, in a very little time, become an efficient officer of the branch to which he might be transferred. I believe that provision should be made in the Act to make such transfers easy.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is provided for in this Bill. Men employed in Papua and New Guinea will have the right to be transferred, for instance, to the Treasury Department in Melbourne.

Senator GARDINER.—There is another provision in the Bill under which officers may be reduced in grade because there is no position open, carrying the amount of salary they have been previously receiving. In such cases, if their services are retained they are appointed to a lower office at a lower rate of pay.

Senator RUSSELL.—Not for twelve months.

Senator GARDINER.—I am obliged to the Minister for his interjection, because it confirms what I desire to say. I can believe that there may be a whole harvest of complaints arising from a provision of this kind. For the purpose of illustration I take the military service, and the case of an officer who has been acting as a colonel and carrying out his duties in an efficient way.

Senator RUSSELL.—Military officers are not under the Public Service Act.

Senator GARDINER.—I am aware of that. I wish they were under the Public Service Act, because a Board of Appeal is provided for under that Act, and if we have a Board of Appeal for the benefit of members of the Public Service, we should have such a Board also for those employed in the military service. To illustrate the matter to which I wish to refer, I take the case of an officer who has been acting as a colonel. He has been efficient, and has done his work well. There is a reconstruction of the military service under which there is no position for this particular officer commensurate with his rank and pay as a colonel. After twelve months his pay is reduced to that of a captain. I say that the Commonwealth is sufficiently wealthy to pay every officer a salary commensurate with his industry and qualifications.

Senator RUSSELL.—The object of the Bill is to get the best men to fill the positions that are open.

Senator GARDINER.—I remind the Minister that the Bill contains several clauses setting out how these reductions of pay may be made. In one part of the Bill provision is made that when an officer who has been reduced because no position of a higher grade is left open to him has to

pass out of the Service he is compensated on the basis of the rate of pay of the higher office which he held.

Senator SENIOR.—The provisions to which the honorable senator refers would not be so objectionable were it not for the water-tight compartments in the Service.

Senator GARDINER.—That is so. If, when an officer who has been reduced passes out of the Service the Government admit the justice of giving him compensation on the basis of the salary of the higher position which he filled, surely they must admit the justice of continuing to such a man retained in the Service the salary of the higher position he occupied, instead of degrading him, and I say it advisedly, in the eyes of his fellow public servants by compelling him to work for a lower rate of pay than he may have been receiving for years in another position. I hope that honorable senators will not lose sight of the need for some remedy for this grievance. I trust that when we come to the Committee stage they will regard this as a Public Service Bill, and not merely as a measure submitted by the Government, and will endeavour to improve it. I hope, also, that before the measure again comes up for our consideration the members of the Public Service will give it serious attention, as they must know more of the conditions of their service than honorable senators can possibly know.

Debate (on motion by Senator SENIOR) adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

TASMANIAN MAIL SERVICE.

Motion (by Senator RUSSELL) proposed—

That the Senate do now adjourn.

Senator BAKHAP (Tasmania) [3.11].—I am loth to delay honorable senators who have to catch trains for the other States. Fortunately, the debate on the Public Service Bill has ended for the time being, and this gives me an opportunity to say a few words on a matter in regard to which I addressed a question to the Minister representing the Postmaster-General. The matter is of such importance, in particular to the State which I have the honour to assist in representing, and to the Commonwealth in general,

that I make no apology for offering a few observations upon it.

For many years past the people of Tasmania have been anticipating some improvement in the steamship service between the mainland and their State. Unhappily, a project which would have given them an improved service, and which took the form of a contract between certain shipping companies and the Postmaster-General, was interrupted by the war. "The new steamer," as it was called in the text of the contract, was named the *Nairana*. It was built in the Old Country, and fitted out for the purpose of what might be called the Inter-State Ferry Service. The exigencies of the war caused the Imperial Government to commandeer the vessel, and use her for carrying aeroplanes in the North Sea, or as an auxiliary to a mother ship associated with aeroplane operations. Since the close of the war the vessel has been re-furnished for passenger traffic, has been brought out to Australia, and, as recently as the 16th of this month, took up the running between the mainland and Tasmania. I am not disposed at any time to take advantage of the immunity which attaches to a member of the Senate to make observations of a caustic character which cannot be replied to in this Chamber by the person who may be the subject of them. But it would have been imagined, and certainly was anticipated by the people of Tasmania, that the improved service to which they might reasonably look forward in the terms of the agreement entered into between the shipping companies and the Postmaster-General, would have been inaugurated with some decent regard for the opinion of mankind, which the great men who formulated the Declaration of American Independence said was always necessary, and should be observed by civilized organizations. That consideration should have caused shipping companies to refrain from an immediate overt act which, I think, can be legally established as a breach of the terms of the contract entered into by them with the Postmaster-General. I am credibly informed that such an overt act in breach of this agreement has already taken place, although the new vessel only took up the running as recently as the 16th inst. Some of my colleagues may desire to say something in reference

to this matter, and, therefore, I shall not trespass unduly upon what they may legitimately consider their opportunity to offer some observations in respect of it. The Postmaster-General's reply to my question, as conveyed to me through the responsible Minister in this chamber, is very general; but it certainly sets forth that the steamship companies have approached the Government for a variation of the agreement under which the Tasmanian people expected to secure an improved mail service. It may be that the condition of things now does not offer such good prospects of remuneration and profit to the companies as were present when the agreement was entered into. But it comes with singularly bad grace from these companies to breach the agreement within a few days of the period when it came into operation. I apologize to them if they have not committed this overt breach of the Covenant, but they certainly contemplate doing something which, beyond doubt, will be a variation of the terms of the agreement. I am informed that during the next few days we shall see not three trips per week run to Tasmania, which the people of that State expected under the provisions of the contract, but only two trips per week. I believe that there are pains and penalties attached to any breach of the agreement, but public utilities which are still in the hands of private corporations, should, in my judgment, be worked with a decent respect for the opinions of the people who are immediately concerned. The State of Tasmania because of its insular character, has suffered acutely during certain economic, labour, and other convulsions which have occurred during the tourist season of the last few years. Its people, therefore, are not disposed to regard with equanimity any breach of the terms of the contract which was entered into with a view to providing them with an improved steamship service. This question concerns not merely the people of Tasmania, but the convenience, and, indeed, the profit, of quite a number of persons on the mainland. If it be definitely shown that Tasmania is not to get the improved service which the Government endeavoured to secure for her under the agreement, there will undoubtedly be a roar of disappointment and indignation from the whole of the people of that State. As

one of its representatives, I feel that they will be justified in declining to submit tamely to any improper variation of the contract which has been entered into. Therefore, without any mealy-mouthed apology, I demand that the Commonwealth authorities shall see that the agreement is complied with, and that the improved mail service which Tasmania expected shall be furnished to her people, or very good reason shown why it is not. The steamship companies and the Government may rest assured that there is the closest collaboration between the representatives of that State upon this matter, and that we regard it as so important that no variation of the agreement—particularly a variation undertaken in an arrogant spirit by the companies themselves—will be tolerated by the people of Tasmania or by their representatives in this Parliament.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [3.21].—I am very grateful to Senator Bakhap for having afforded me an opportunity to say a few words upon this matter that is so important to the State which I have the honour to represent. Tasmania, because of her insular position, has suffered materially in many ways, especially during the past twelve or fifteen years.

Senator GARDINER.—I beg to call attention to the state of the Senate. I would certainly like to hear other Tasmanian senators speaking upon this question. [*Quorum formed.*]

Senator PAYNE.—Neither Senator Bakhap nor I ask for any favour in its consideration. It is a question which not only affects the people of Tasmania, but which must also seriously affect commercial people on the mainland, because, to a very great extent, our trade is done with them. It came as a shock to many of us to learn only yesterday that the steamship companies which have contracted to carry the mail between the mainland and Tasmania have, as far as one can judge by the press report, already broken their contract. Senator Bakhap has stated that a report is current that the service of three trips each way weekly, which is provided for under the contract, is to be reduced to two trips each way weekly. I have here a copy of the *Argus* newspaper, in which I find in the sailings which are advertised for next week verification of that report. The contract provides that a steamer shall

leave Melbourne for Launceston with the mails every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, but the advertisement sets out that the *Nairana* next week will sail from Melbourne only on Wednesday and Saturday.

Senator RUSSELL.—I understand that the new boat is of a much better standard than the old boat.

Senator PAYNE.—That does not affect the position. Provision is made in the contract for the running of the new boat.

Senator RUSSELL.—All shipping to-day is conditional upon the ability to get the requisite vessels. We cannot get more than a fortnightly mail service from England.

Senator PAYNE.—But the contract with these steamship companies provides for the maintenance of a mail service between Tasmania and the mainland by the running of three trips each way weekly.

Senator RUSSELL.—The point is that there are now two vessels engaged in the service. Are they capable of doing three round trips each?

Senator PAYNE.—There must be three sailings from Melbourne each week, and three from Launceston.

Senator RUSSELL.—I understand that the *Loongana* has been so hard pressed in maintaining the service that she is badly in need of an overhaul, and is now being docked.

Senator PAYNE.—The contract provides that there shall be three sailings weekly of these two vessels, or by one of them, showing plainly that the boats are considered capable of carrying on the service singly should either of them be required to do so. I enter my protest against the possibility of Tasmania being placed in the unfortunate position of having a mail service in the future, which will be inferior to that which it had in the past, despite the fact that that State has made very great progress commercially, and that her population has considerably increased during the past few years. Since the inauguration of certain undertakings in Tasmania, a great deal of capital has been attracted to that State. By reason of the natural facilities which have been given to Tasmania by an all-wise Providence, works are now in progress there which are at once the admiration and the envy of the rest of the Commonwealth. These undertakings having been commenced, the people of that State realize

that it is of vital importance that their mail service shall not be interfered with in the way that the newspapers reported yesterday they are to be interfered with. I trust that the authorities will look very carefully into the question, and that as a result Tasmania will not be made to suffer.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [3.28].—After a long period of war the Government regret that owing to the limited tonnage that is available, our mail services are not as adequate or as expeditious as we desire.

Senator BAKHAP.—It is said that ships are being given away with a pound of tea in England.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator may think so. There are lots of vessels for sale in England, but they would probably cost more for repairs than would be involved in the construction of entirely new ships. Many of them are practically only hulls, with neither boilers nor fittings. If they were brought to Australia in the hope that they might be repaired we should find that it would pay us better to build entirely new vessels than to touch them with a forty-foot pole. It is the desire of the Government to provide greater mail facilities than we at present possess, and we are moving in that direction as rapidly as possible. The Postmaster-General, I can assure honorable senators, will do his best to see that every condition in the Tasmanian mail contract is complied with. But we cannot always insure that. In the contract for the carriage of our over-sea mails we cannot get anything better than a fortnightly service for some six or eight months to come, because suitable vessels are not available. Moreover, the shipping companies say that no vessels of a suitable character can be purchased, and that, consequently, new ships will require to be built.

Senator BAKHAP.—But we have the boats here which were contemplated under the Tasmanian mail contract.

Senator RUSSELL.—I am quite aware of that. The Postmaster-General will do all that he can to insure a strict adherence to the terms of that contract, in the interests, not only of Tasmania, but of the Commonwealth.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 3.30 p.m.

House of Representatives.

Friday, 22 April, 1921.

MR. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson) took the chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

MANUFACTURERS AND STRIKE-BREAKERS.

STATEMENTS AT THE AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURERS' CONFERENCE.

MR. TUDOR.—Has the attention of the Minister for Trade and Customs been directed to a report appearing in last night's issue of the *Herald* of statements made at the Australian Manufacturers' Conference held at Launceston? According to the report, Mr. Martyn, a Victorian manufacturer, moved, and Mr. McKay, of the Sunshine Harvester Works, seconded, a motion as to the necessity for a federation of all Australian employers of labour, and a Mr. Kennedy, of Tasmania, who supported the motion, suggested that the members of the federation should act, and not speak. He urged the adoption of the German system under which, he said, 70,000 volunteers had been enlisted to break down strikes. The German Government, he mentioned, had subsidized this movement. Can the Minister inform the House what class of goods is manufactured by Mr. Kennedy, and whether the Government think it right that manufacturers, even before the Tariff is passed, should propose to take all the advantages of the duties for which it provides, and, at the same time, bring into existence an organization of strike-breakers to operate throughout the Commonwealth?

MR. GREENE.—I have not seen the paragraph to which the honorable member refers, and would therefore ask him to give notice of his question.

ADDITIONS TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

MR. BAMFORD.—Having regard to our approaching departure for Canberra, does the Minister for Works and Railways think that the additions to the

northern wing of this building which are now being made are justifiable?

MR. GROOM.—The proposed additions were submitted to the House, and the necessary funds were appropriated for the purpose. The alteration is not an extensive one, but is essential to the convenient housing of the staff, as well as to the convenience of honorable members themselves.

MR. HECTOR LAMOND.—Members have done without it for twenty years.

MR. GROOM.—That is so, but the additions will provide a great and very necessary convenience.

PAPERS.

ANGLO-JAPANESE TREATY: COPIES FOR MEMBERS. — IMPERIAL CONFERENCE AGENDA PAPER.

MR. RYAN.—Will the Prime Minister take steps to have the terms of the existing Anglo-Japanese treaty published as a parliamentary paper?

MR. HUGHES.—I thought that had been done.

MR. RYAN.—Not yet.

MR. HUGHES.—Then I shall see that it is done.

Later:

MR. HUGHES.—I have here a copy of the Anglo-Japanese alliance and the Anglo-Japanese agreements of 1902, 1905, 1911, as well as the Anglo-Japanese declaration of 1920. I move—

That the paper be printed.

The honorable member for Balaclava (Mr. Watt) some days ago referred to statements made in the press that certain papers had been printed in Canada, and reference was also made to them last night by the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan). I have given instructions that these be collected, and if they are available during the day I shall forthwith lay them on the table. I understand that all have been collected with one exception, for which search has been made. I have no doubt it will be found, and as soon as they are all ready I will lay them on the table.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

MR. BOWDEN.—Will the Prime Minister state whether any agenda of the work to be done at the Imperial Conference has been prepared?

Mr. HUGHES.—There is an agenda.

Mr. BOWDEN.—If it is not a secret document, will the Prime Minister make it available to members of the House?

Mr. HUGHES.—Yes. I shall read the agenda, and then lay it on the table. It has been obtained from the cables, and handed to me from my office. I cannot say whether there is any later cable, and I give the information as I have it myself. It is as follows:—

SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING OF PRIME MINISTERS TO BE HELD IN LONDON IN JUNE, 1921.

1. Renewal of Anglo-Japanese Alliance.
2. Naval, Military, and Air Defence.
3. Arrangements for securing a common Imperial policy in foreign affairs.
4. Composition of agenda and meeting place of Constitution Conference contemplated in resolution 9 of Imperial War Conference 1917.
5. Allotment of reparation amongst various parts of British Empire.

That is the agenda as submitted by Britain. As I have already said, I have suggested that, in addition, the Conference should discuss the question of communication, including wireless, between the various parts of the Empire. I lay the agenda on the table.

Ordered to be printed.

The following paper was also laid on the table:—

Public Service Act—Promotion of F. Saleeba, Attorney-General's Department.

MILITARY COURT OF APPEAL.

Mr. FLEMING.—I desire to ask the Assistant Minister for Defence whether, as reported, the Minister for Defence is about to establish a Court of Appeal to consider complaints regarding injustices suffered by high officers while on active service? If so, will the honorable gentleman see that the Court will be such as will also hear complaints of the rank and file, and so constituted as to give rankers a fighting chance of redress of grievances, consideration for losses, and indignities suffered by them?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—I regret that I do not feel that I can give the honorable member a considered reply at this stage. I therefore ask him to put his question on the notice-paper.

ANZAC DAY.

SERVICE AT ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: INVITATION TO MEMBERS.—PAYMENT FOR THE HOLIDAY TO WORKERS.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—I desire to inform honorable members who have not received a notification that an invitation has been extended by the lay canon in charge of St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, to members of the House to attend Evensong at 4.45 p.m. on Anzac Day. As an answer is required before 12 noon this day, honorable members who propose to attend will be good enough, I hope, to notify the Serjeant-at-Arms at once, so that the necessary accommodation may be provided. Notices have been sent as far as possible to honorable members individually, but I understand that some of them have not hitherto heard of the matter.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The Prime Minister, in his endeavour to make the celebration of Anzac Day worthy of the occasion, has asked employers to give their employees a holiday. Will the right honorable gentleman also tell the employers that the giving of this holiday will not be a loyal act unless the employees are paid for the day?

Mr. HUGHES.—When I asked the employers to give their employees a holiday on Anzac Day, I do not think any one misunderstood me. I am sure that the employers who are inclined to give the holiday will read into the letter of my appeal the spirit which is behind it. I shall certainly consider it no holiday if employers are merely going to say to their employees, "If you like to stay away from work you need not come, and we will see about it at the weekend." That is not what I meant at all. There may be exceptions, but I think it is very surprising the way the public have responded to my appeal. The Government have done all they can by setting an example. I am not going to bully the people outside; it is bad enough to have to bully people inside.

AUSTRALIAN EXPORTS.

SHIPMENTS OF B GRADE FLOUR AND WHEAT — COMPLAINTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA—STALE TINNED FOODS.

Mr. MARKS.—As I understand that this may be the last day on which the

Prime Minister will be in the House prior to his departure for London, I ask him whether he will make a statement dealing with the question of the export to South Africa of certain B grade wheat and flour which I brought under his notice some days ago? I understand that the South African Government have not ordered this wheat and flour to be destroyed, but will not accept any of it since it is unfit for human consumption. By the export of such commodities a great injury is being done the fair name of Australia. To use a vulgarism, Australia's name "stinks in the nostrils of the people" of South Africa, and a very grave situation is arising. Will the Prime Minister make a statement on the subject?

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member brought this matter under my notice about a fortnight ago, and it was again brought to my attention yesterday by the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins). It is alleged, and I believe it to be true, that a very large quantity of wheat and flour, which turned out to be unfit for bread making, was sold to South Africa. I am informed that it was so bad that the Kaffirs would not eat it. Portion of it was sent to Britain, where it was condemned as unfit for human food, and was sold for the making of paste for the use of bill stickers and others. The amount represented by the whole of the shipment I have not been able to ascertain precisely, but, speaking very generally, it is somewhere between £300,000 and £500,000. I feel very strongly about the matter, and think that every Australian ought to do so. This wheat was sold in some cases with a certificate issued by a State Government. In other cases it was not. I am informed that some of the flour and wheat covered by such certificates was not only unfit for human consumption, but absolutely stank.

The Government of South Africa has taken up this matter. The Government of the Commonwealth must also take it up. It would be most improper for me to attempt to lay the blame on the shoulders of individuals or of particular Governments unless and until the evidence is clear. A mere *ex parte* statement is not

sufficient on which to act. It is abundantly clear, however, that hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of B grade wheat and flour was sent out of this country to South Africa, which is one of our best markets, and proved to be absolutely unfit for human consumption. I submit—and I speak as a tyro in this matter—that there is an implied warranty with flour, if not with wheat, that it is sold for making bread or biscuits for human consumption. I think that any Court would hold that such an implied warranty existed, unless there was clear evidence that it was the practice of the trade to sell under other conditions. That being so, and the matter having been brought officially before me, I make no apology for this comparatively long statement. I want only to say that I think it is the duty of this Government to see that not only the reputation and honour of Australia, but its material interests are safeguarded by putting the matter right. If it involves the payment of compensation, then the compensation must be made, and the Commonwealth ought to see, as far as it has power, that it is made by the people who are primarily responsible.

Dr. MALONEY.—In view of statements published in the medical and mercantile press, I desire to ask the Minister for Trade and Customs whether, having regard to the export of foods improperly packed and unfit for consumption, and in order to keep from reproach the name of Australia, and also to prevent serious illness by export of old tinned foods, he will bring before the Cabinet the necessity of having every tin of food that is exported stamped by impression on the cover with the date of tinning?

Mr. GREENE.—The Government is fully alive to the necessity of preserving Australia's reputation in regard to food-stuffs which are exported. At the present time action is being taken by my Department to revise the whole of the regulations dealing with this matter, and to extend them in a number of directions. The suggestion contained in the honorable member's question will be taken into consideration in connexion therewith.

Mr. JACKSON.—In view of the serious reports from British importers regarding jams and other products obtained by them from Australia, will the Prime Minister, when in England, take an opportunity to inform the British public that if they furnish him with definite cases he will prosecute the Australian exporter?

Mr. HUGHES.—I am obliged to the honorable member for asking the question. My statement on this matter is misunderstood if the House and the country think that it is only wheat and flour that are sent out in a way that reflects discredit on this country. I have had collected by my office a number of cases—not hypothetical, but actual cases—of products, manufactured and primary, in which we ought to excel, and, as a matter of fact, do excel, having given ground for serious complaint. There have been some most glaring cases of goods being exported not true to description or sample, and thus calculated to bring the name of Australia into disrepute and to kill our trade. That is not in South Africa, but mainly, I think, in the East. One case was quite distinct from articles of food, having reference to a case of bolts and nuts. I do not know the calibre, but it was a matter of sending out, say, $\frac{3}{8}$ bolts and $\frac{5}{8}$ nuts. Naturally, there was some surprise and some dissatisfaction amongst the people who received the articles, but they had no redress. Some of the States have taken steps to insure that exports are true to the sample, and if the States do not see to this business we must exercise those powers which are given us over exports. We must say that unless exports are true to sample, and not in any way calculated to prejudice the name of Australia, they shall not leave the country.

Mr. TUDOR.—Does the Prime Minister not think that it would be advisable to increase the inspectorial staff, so far as the products mentioned are concerned, and pay them such salaries as would make it impossible for private employers to come along and buy them out of the service, as in the past?

Mr. HUGHES.—I do not know that that has been done.

Mr. GREENE.—I think I can answer the question to the extent of saying that action has been taken recently by the Government, with a view to making the meat inspectors permanent employees.

Under the old arrangement they were temporary employees, and when they ceased to be inspectors they went back to the work of slaughtering. As these men had to look for jobs after leaving the Public Service, it was hardly likely they could carry out their duties adequately. We are taking steps to tighten up the whole of the arrangement with regard to the inspection of meat, both canned and fresh. We are appointing a number of veterinarians to give full value to the certificate the world requires, and, as I say, making the meat inspectors permanent officers. This is only one part of what we are attempting to do in this connexion.

Mr. MCWILLIAMS.—In view of the serious general statements which we have heard this morning, would it not be better, under the circumstances, to mention the names of the firms who are alleged to have exported goods not true to sample, so that all the firms engaged in the export trade may not be blamed for the action of a few robbers.

Mr. GREENE.—That matter has been considered, and we may find ourselves forced to take that course; but the best plan is to first get our standard right.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—If the disquieting statements we have heard are true they are calculated to bring great discredit on Australia. Does the Prime Minister not think the position serious enough to justify the appointment of some kind of Committee of Inquiry in order to sheet the charges home to the culprits who are responsible?

Mr. HUGHES.—I certainly do. There are at present two men in Australia, one a South African and the other an Australian, who has been in South Africa. They are engaged in the wheat and flour trade; and I have asked them to put their case before me in writing. I must have facts; and one of these men has given a written statement, and the other, whom I met yesterday, I have asked to also furnish one. As soon as I get some evidence to go on I certainly think there should be an inquiry, whether those concerned be the Government or individuals—whether it be the Wheat Board or not. Apart from the moral aspect, we simply cannot afford to allow the position to continue. It would pay us better to give South Africa £300,000 or £400,000, than to allow the

position to remain as at present. Otherwise South Africa will never buy another pennyworth of flour or wheat from us, for it will be impossible to sell it. I was informed yesterday that a man went to South Africa from South Australia with the object of selling wheat, but he was unable to do so; and we cannot blame the South African people. We must set this matter right.

Mr. GABB.—The Prime Minister says that a man has gone from South Australia to South Africa in connexion with the wheat business. Are we to infer from that that South Australia is particularly to blame?

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—I call the attention of the honorable member to the fact that there is developing an irregular debate. It is not in order to ask a question arising out of the answer given to a previous question.

Mr. HILL.—As the good name of Australia is at stake, owing to reported sales of inferior wheat and flour to South Africa, I think the Prime Minister should obtain a statement from the Australian Wheat Board clearly setting forth the position. So far as the Australian Wheat Board is concerned—

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! The honorable member is going quite beyond the asking of a question. He is not entitled to make a statement without the leave of the House. If the honorable member desires I shall ask the leave of the House for him.

Later:

Mr. HILL.—I ask the Prime Minister whether he will obtain from the manager of the Australian Wheat Board a statement setting forth the exact position?

Mr. HUGHES.—I certainly will. I do not think the Australian Wheat Board has anything to do with this sale, and I am not sure that the State Wheat Board is concerned in it either. However, I will ask the Manager of the Australian Wheat Board to make a statement so that any doubts may be set at rest.

WAR SERVICE HOMES.

Mr. McGRATH.—In view of the fact that some years have now elapsed since the appointment of the War Service Homes Commission, will the Assistant

Minister for Repatriation inform the House when the Commission is likely to start building homes for soldiers in the inland cities of Victoria?

Mr. RODGERS.—The programme is being carried out all over Australia without respect to localities, and according to the requirements of the applicants.

FEDERAL CAPITAL.

Mr. LAVELLE.—There is a statement in the press this morning to the effect that a deputation of honorable members waited on the Prime Minister yesterday in order to place obstacles in the way of moving the Seat of Government to Canberra. Seeing that no names are given in the press, can the Prime Minister inform the House whether the honorable members who waited on him were afraid or ashamed to have their names published?

Mr. HUGHES.—That is a question I cannot very well answer. People come to me in my room—it is almost like a confessional—and tell me all sorts of things. Of course, I never say a word.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

Dr. MALONEY.—I rise to make a personal explanation. Yesterday the honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Bamford) did something which I thought was hardly fair. He courteously told me during the afternoon that he intended to speak on a certain matter with which my name was connected. I appreciated that courtesy, and said that I would be present when he spoke. Later he informed me that he did not intend to speak on the subject during the sitting. While I was speaking in the grievance debate, and was perhaps rather heated because of the interest I had in the subject with which I was dealing, I received from the honorable member a note saying that he had again altered his intention, and would follow me. I considered his action unfair, and I used the word "trick," which should not be used in relation to friends. I value the friendship of my old associate too much to have it disturbed by a harsh word spoken in a moment of excitement. As the honorable member has read a letter from me, I shall take the earliest opportunity of reading my lawyer's reply to it. Then, I think, my old friend will agree that we are level.

Mr. BAMFORD.—I, too, wish to make a personal explanation, which is the first I have made in this House. The Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) is entirely to blame for the little *contretemps* which occurred yesterday. He desired that the grievance debate should cease at a certain time, so that the debate on the Imperial Conference might be resumed. For that reason I decided not to speak, and so informed the honorable member for Melbourne (Dr. Maloney). However, there were so many speakers on the Opposition side, as there generally are, that the Treasurer subsequently informed me that the debate would be allowed to continue until the dinner hour. As I was anxious to deal with a certain matter, I decided to speak, and advised the honorable member for Melbourne accordingly. When I first told him that I did not intend to speak during that debate, I was not aware that he proposed to address the House. My conscience is absolutely clear.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I rise to join in this kissing chorus that is being indulged in by other honorable members.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order!

Mr. ANSTEY.—I wish to make a personal explanation in regard to something that happened last night. While I was speaking I was subjected to a volley of interjections, which you know, sir, are entirely disorderly, and from which you would have protected me had you been in the chair.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! That is a reflection on the Deputy Speaker.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I have no desire to reflect upon the Deputy Speaker, who, I feel sure, was so interested in my speech that he was unable to hear the interjections. Amongst them was one from the honorable member for Wentworth (Mr. Marks), to which I replied, but not in my usual courteous manner. I understand that the honorable member feels aggrieved by what I said. It was not my intention to injure his feelings, but if the honorable member has the courage to come into the corridor I will explain to him the incident in a manner that will heal any breach that has been created.

Mr. MARKS.—I am obliged to the honorable member for Bourke for having made this explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I do not wish the proceedings of the House to degenerate into what people outside might reasonably regard as a farce. And I remind honorable members that a personal explanation must have some reference to a matter in regard to which an honorable member may have been misunderstood or misrepresented. If that is the purpose of the honorable member for Wentworth, he will be in order in speaking, but he will not be in order in continuing an irregular debate in pursuance of a matter that has been raised by way of personal explanation.

Mr. MARKS.—I desire, by way of personal explanation, to refer to something that was said in the House last night. While the honorable member was speaking in regard to Naval defence, I interjected that Australia should do her share. The honorable member for Bourke took up the word "share" and gave it such an inflection as to imply that I speak with what is commonly called "side." I leave honorable members to draw their own conclusions as to whether I do talk in that way. But, in fairness to the honorable member for Bourke, I wish to say that he came to me and offered an apology which I accepted, and my reply was that if the honorable member would come outside on the bowling green, I would deal with him in the manner which he deserved.

ADJOURNMENT (*Formal*).

PRESENTATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—I have received from the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) an intimation that he proposes to move the adjournment of the House in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—"The action of the right honorable the Prime Minister in accepting an honorarium other than a prescribed parliamentary allowance for services rendered in his official capacity, and the fact of members of the Government having declined to supply information relating thereto to honorable members."

Five honorable members having risen in their places,

Question proposed.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I rise to a point of order. I submit that the subject which the honorable member for Batman desires to discuss is not a definite matter of urgent public importance, and that there is nothing in the Standing Orders which in any way derogates from your discretion as to the acceptance of a motion of this kind. I know that it has been said sometimes by Mr. Speaker that the fact of five honorable members rising in their places to signify acquiescence in a motion determines the point of urgency and public importance. But the mere rising of five members cannot take from you, sir, the discretionary power that is reposed in you by all the rules of Parliament. Therefore, in view of all the circumstances and having regard to the fact that a period has been put to another important debate, I ask whether you should permit a discussion on a motion of this kind. The House has already put a period to that other debate, which is of much more importance than the subject which has been brought forward by the honorable member for Batman, and here is a motion intruded to interfere with the other debate and to prevent the House from carrying out the arrangement which has been definitely made. Apart from that, I call attention to standing order 38, which governs this procedure—

No motion for the adjournment of the House shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, unless a member, after petitions have been presented and notices of questions and motions given, and before the business of the day is called on, rising in his place, shall propose to move the adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance (which he shall then state and hand in in writing to the Speaker), and unless five members shall thereupon rise in their places, as indicating approval of the proposed discussion. The member proposing the motion for adjournment shall not be allowed to address the House on such motion until the Speaker shall have ascertained that five members approve of the proposed motion.

It is clear that the rising of five members indicates merely that they approve of the proposed discussion. They do not determine whether or not the discussion shall take place. That discretion is inherent in the Chair. The five members simply indicate that so far as they are concerned they are agreeable that the discussion should proceed. Their action does not remove by one iota the discretion which resides in the Presiding Officer. That that

is so is made perfectly clear by the following passage in *May*, page 241:—

A matter submitted to the House in pursuance of this standing order which fails to obtain the requisite support cannot during the same session be again brought forward in the same manner; nor can more than one such motion for adjournment be made during the same sitting of the House. Though the responsibility of bringing forward a matter, as a matter of urgency, rests with the member who desires to exercise the right given by the standing order, still there must be some colour of urgency in the proposal; and the Speaker has declined to submit a motion for adjournment to the House because, in his opinion, the subject to be brought forward was not a "definite matter of urgent public importance."

I submit that with that clear statement of the practice of the House of Commons, together with our own standing order which limits the right of members to a mere expression of approval of the motion proposed, but in no way disturbs the discretion of the Chair, you, sir, should say whether or not, in your opinion, this matter is a definite one of urgent importance which cannot await discussion at the proper time. I ask for this ruling particularly in view of the fact that it is sought to intrude this motion into another debate, and that that course of action must take away from the time allowed to honorable members for the discussion of the more important subject. I submit that your ruling should be guided by the consideration of what is clearly in the interests of members of this House, and, above all, that it should incline towards greater freedom of debate, and not to restriction.

Mr. BRENNAN.—Is this a "stone-wall" to burke discussion on the matter?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I would like to appeal to the honorable member's sense of fair play, to withdraw the motion.

Mr. BRENNAN.—If the Treasurer had any appreciation of fair play he would allow the motion to be discussed.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We are sending the Prime Minister as our delegate to the Imperial Conference, and is it quite fair that, on the eve of his departure—

Mr. ANSTEY.—I rise to a point of order. This is a "stone-wall."

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order!

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I neither want to "stone-wall" nor to do anything else that will restrict fair debate.

Mr. RYAN.—Well, will the Treasurer keep to his point of order?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I will.

Honorable members interjecting,

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! If honorable members will not obey the Chair, I shall have to take the step of naming the next offender in that direction.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I have stated my point of order, and will only add that nothing is further from my thoughts than to waste the time of the House. I have taken this present course of action feeling that, surrounded as honorable members are by the circumstances attaching to the other discussion, this kind of procedure should not be permitted by the Presiding Officer.

Mr. TUDOR.—On the 5th November last year you, Mr. Speaker, when a similar point was raised—also by the Treasurer—ruled very distinctly and emphatically that the procedure was in order. With respect to the argument raised by the right honorable gentleman concerning the fact of a definite time limit having been fixed for the taking of a certain vote, any agreement which has been entered into will be honoured by honorable members on this side.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But there was no agreement. We were “gagged.”

Mr. TUDOR.—Is that so? I was absent at the time, and have apparently been misinformed of the exact circumstances.

Mr. GREENE.—The very fact that Mr. Speaker ruled, on the occasion indicated by the honorable member, that the matter then arising was a question of urgency—

Mr. TUDOR.—I appreciate the point sought to be made by the interjection, but upon the question of urgency I maintain that it is a thousand times better, and in the best interests of the Prime Minister himself, that the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) should have introduced his motion while the right honorable gentleman is in attendance, rather than that he should have waited until after the Prime Minister's departure. If the honorable member for Batman, or any other honorable member on this side, were to wait until the Prime Minister had left for the Imperial Conference, his action would be strongly denounced, and he would be accused of having deliberately delayed until the Prime Minister's back was turned.

Mr. CORSER.—But why did not the honorable member introduce the matter before?

Mr. TUDOR.—This House resumed its sittings only about a fortnight ago. In order to introduce the discussion of a matter of urgent public importance an honorable member must await his opportunity. During the past week there has certainly been no chance to move the adjournment of the House upon the subject under review; and there was no opportunity before the adjournment of the House last year, because the Prime Minister returned from the presentation ceremonial in Sydney on the very day of the adjournment. At that time doubts were expressed in the press concerning whether the gratuity to the Prime Minister did not involve an invasion of constitutional limitations. I do not propose to curtail the time which may be devoted to the discussion either of this point of order or of the urgent motion, or of the other business which has been interrupted. But I maintain that the ruling which you gave on the 5th November, 1920, Mr. Speaker, applies equally now, and that the honorable member for Batman, therefore, has every right to proceed.

Mr. SPEAKER.—In reply to the Treasurer's (Sir Joseph Cook) point of order, and answering, first, that portion of his argument in support thereof which had to do with the effect of the discussion of this motion for adjournment upon the decision of another question, I have to say that such decision will not in any way be delayed by any proceedings which may take place in the interval, since the House has fixed a time for the vote to be taken. If the House chooses to consider other business meanwhile, and to allow the business which has been interrupted to be temporarily set aside, such a course is entirely in the discretion of the House. And when the time arrives which has been fixed for the termination of the debate, the Speaker is bound to interrupt the discussion then proceeding, and put the vote to the House.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It does limit the discussion, though, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER.—That is probably so, but it is a matter for the House itself. And at the time which has been fixed, namely, at a quarter to four this afternoon, the business at that moment before the House must be interrupted by the Speaker, in order to give effect to the decision of the House in regard to the taking of the vote. With respect to the right

of the Speaker to exercise his discretion concerning whether a motion of this kind should be discussed, I would point out that rulings have been given on this very point on more than one occasion by different Speakers which have determined our practice. As an example, *Hansard*, in its record of the debate of 20th August, 1915 (page 6008), states that the honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Bamford) raised a point of order concerning whether a motion which had been introduced was one of urgent public importance. The Speaker—the Honorable Charles McDonald—thereupon stated—

The Standing Orders provide that if a certain number of honorable members rise in their places to support the honorable member who desires to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a subject of urgent public importance, that of itself constitutes a sufficient ground of urgency. I have no discretion in the matter.

That decision is in accordance with other rulings which have been given. It accords also with rulings given in the House of Commons by Denison, Brand, and other Speakers. I draw the attention of honorable members to the fact that this view appears to be supported by the standing order requiring forty members of the House of Commons to rise in their places to support the motion for the special adjournment of the House in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance. I am bound to admit that there are conflicting decisions; but rulings have been given in the House of Commons that the fact of forty members of the House rising to support a motion of the kind determined alike its public importance and the question of its urgency. In our Standing Orders the number is five. Honorable members of this Chamber, when rising in support of such a motion, therefore, take the responsibility of declaring that, in their opinion, the subject-matter of the motion is both urgent and important. Under our established practice here it rests entirely with the House to decide whether a motion is of sufficient importance to be discussed. If the House is not of that opinion, members have in their own hands the means to prevent the debate proceeding. It is not, however, a part of the duties of the Speaker to decide the matter.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [11.55].—I will proceed now to address myself to

the subject-matter of the motion as read by you, sir, without reference to the unrehearsed preliminaries. This incident which I am now seeking to have considered by the House arose last year at the close of our sittings. And, as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Tudor) has rightly pointed out, it was only on the very day when this House adjourned that the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) returned from Sydney after receiving the gratuity, the propriety of which I am asking the Prime Minister himself, and honorable members generally, to express and record their opinions upon. Yesterday I addressed a question to the Prime Minister on this same subject. I do not know whether the right honorable gentleman misunderstood the purpose and reasons for which the question was asked, but he would have done himself and the House a greater measure of justice and would have extended to me a larger meed of courtesy—though no more than a due measure—if he had given a candid reply to a question having to do with a very delicate and, I submit, a very important matter of public interest. It is important historically, and is also of present immediate importance.

The origin and genesis of this whole matter is referred to in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of Thursday, 25th November, 1920, under the heading "People's Tribute to Prime Minister"; and we are therein informed:—

The public tribute last night in King's Hall to the Prime Minister (Mr. W. M. Hughes) in recognition of his signal services to his country during the war and at the Peace Conference table was strikingly expressed, not only in a generous sense pecuniarily, but also in the crowded audience.

And, taking this report for the time being as fairly accurate—although I have no intention nor the time to read it at length—it is recorded that a cheque was presented to Mr. Hughes from admirers both in Australia and in London for a sum amounting to over £25,000. It is further stated that Alderman William Brooks, M.L.C., presided, and that those on the platform included:—

Sir Alfred Meeks, Mr. W. A. Holman, Sir Thomas Hughes, M.L.C., Mr. J. C. Watson, Mr. G. F. Earp, M.L.C., Mr. David Storey, M.L.C., Sir Arthur Rickard, Senator Duncan, Brigadier-General Herring, Senator Pratten, Mr. R. B. Orchard, Mr. E. H. Farrar, M.L.C., Senator

Josiah Thomas, Mr. P. T. Taylor, M.L.C., Mr. O. C. Beale, Mr. William Vicars, Mr. Lee, M.L.A., Major Marr, M.P., Colonel Wanliss (Victoria), and Mr. E. E. Collins.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Who are all these people?

Mr. BRENNAN.—They are distinguished persons. They include people having interests in the business world, and they embrace those—I am led to believe—who may safely and not unjustly be presumed to have had something more than an academic interest in legislation passed through this House publicly, as well as in certain secret regulations passed from time to time by this Government. But I am bound to say that there does not seem to be, among these names, a representative of the proletariat. I do not see that the men who fought the war were adequately represented, although it is true that many distinguished persons who took a hand in the direction of the war were well in evidence. On that occasion the following telegram was received from the Federal Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook):—

Your colleagues regret their absence from meeting to-night. Send you warmest congratulations on this public recognition of unique services rendered to Empire, Allies and Commonwealth.

It is not for me to suggest that this telegram affords any reason for the impatience displayed by the right honorable the Treasurer in regard to this debate. It is sometimes said of modest men that their right hand does not know what their left hand does, but it is clear, in regard to this Government, that their left hand is well apprised of what the right hand does, and approves of it. Nothing more touching than the confidence of the Treasurer in the Prime Minister has been known since the recorded submission of Mr. Spenlaw to the indescribable Mr. Jorkins.

The telegram in which the Treasurer expressly puts on record his opinion that this testimonial was a public recognition of unique services rendered to the Commonwealth leads me to point to the terms of the Constitution relevant to the matter. Section 45 of the Constitution Act says—

If a senator or member of the House of Representatives—

- (i) becomes subject to any of the disabilities mentioned in the last preceding section; or

- (ii) takes the benefit, whether by assignment, composition, or otherwise, or any law relating to bankrupt or insolvent debtors; or

- (iii) directly or indirectly takes or agrees to take any fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth, or for services rendered in the Parliament to any person or State;

his place shall thereupon become vacant.

As I said a moment ago, this matter is of great historical interest. It was in the debates of the 1891 Convention that the first part of paragraph iii. was adopted, and probably the Prime Minister, if he deigns to make any reply, may seek to point out that Mr. Carruthers, who raised the question, seemed to direct his mind more particularly to the fact that, while other general contractors with the Commonwealth were disqualified from occupying seats in Parliament, there was one exception in the case of counsel who were still to be permitted to accept briefs from the Commonwealth and to argue for an honorarium the public questions in support, it may be hoped, of the public interest. Mr. Carruthers addressed himself particularly to that aspect of the case against the privileges of learned counsel; Sir Edmund Barton took a contrary view, and a very interesting discussion followed. However, the first part of paragraph iii, namely, “directly or indirectly takes or agrees to take any fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth” was adopted by that Convention. The latter part of the paragraph, namely, “or for services rendered in the Parliament to any person or State,” was inserted at the 1898 Convention on an amendment moved by Sir George Reid, and completed the paragraph as it stands to-day. It may be said that in regard to the first part of the paragraph, which I suggest relates particularly to the matter now under discussion, that the persons who first moved in the direction of inserting it in the Constitution did not have within their purview the particular class of case I am now considering, but the Prime Minister will, no doubt, be familiar with that well-known rule of construction that where the language of the Statute is clear and unambiguous, those whose business it

is to interpret it will not have regard to the expressions of opinion of those who originally moved to have the provision inserted, nor their objective nor the language employed in moving it. The resultant terms being clear, must be given, as my right honorable friend will surely agree, the ordinary plain meaning of plain English.

I do not accept the responsibility at present of expressing a legal opinion on the matter, but I do maintain that as such a delicate matter affecting the purity of our public life and the honour of our public men has been raised, and I think properly raised, the correct attitude of the persons concerned is a rapid readiness to clear the air as far as can be done. In matters of this kind we should apply the standard applied to, and by, judicial tribunals, namely, that they must not only be free from bias, but also be free from the suspicion of bias. I suggest therefore that both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution enjoin the greatest care and freedom from equivocation in a matter of this kind, because if the Prime Minister will take the trouble to run his eye over the list of the great men his predecessors in our public life, he will find the names of many who have been tenderly sensitive in regard to anything touching the purity of public affairs, especially where it seemed even remotely to reflect upon themselves. In order to show the attitude of at least one representative public man in the past in similar circumstances, and without regard to the purely technical legal aspect of the case, which, after all, is the least important, I shall read for the benefit of honorable members a very interesting letter reprinted in the *Age* on Wednesday, 1st December, 1920, and written by Sir Henry Parkes many years ago to a committee of gentlemen who proposed to make him just such a testimonial as was made in this case to the Prime Minister. The introductory note sets out that in 1881 Sir Henry Parkes, who was then Premier of New South Wales, was about to visit England, and some leading citizens of Sydney proposed to present him with a testimonial in the form of a gift of money. On public grounds Sir Henry Parkes declined the gift, and in the appended letter to the

secretary of the testimonial committee he explained his reasons for so doing:—

Sydney, 12th December, 1881.

My Dear Sir,—When you and Mr. Moore waited upon me in the early part of last week to ascertain whether it would be agreeable to my feelings that some steps should be taken to publicly mark my departure from the colony, I stated in reply that I had no wish to subject my friends to the trouble of any public movement on my behalf, and when it was further urged that in all probability steps of the kind would be taken irrespective of my wishes in the matter, I added in substance that in view of any such course, I could express no opinion, but leave the event to shape itself.

Having endeavoured to express my feelings to this effect, it is with much reluctance that I am now constrained to interfere with the movement which has been set on foot in my favour. But it never occurred to me in the first instance that any such movement would assume the form of a pecuniary testimonial.

After carefully considering the proposal of my friends, as now presented to the public, I feel it incumbent upon me to state that I must respectfully decline to accept the intended honor.* Occupying the high place of first Minister in the Government of the country, it is clearly my duty, as far as lies in my power, to preserve my public position from personal entanglements which at the present or some future time might be made the ground of reproach or suspicion. Calumny is on all occasions sufficiently busy in misrepresenting the actions of men intrusted with power, and where the choice is within my own hands I must choose to hold myself entirely free to act, if necessary, against the interests of individuals who may be my political friends. It is a matter of principle, which appears the plainer the more it is examined. I could not reconcile the acceptance of a gift of money from the public with any sense of propriety and obligation as the occupant of a high political office.

I beg you to accept yourself, and to convey to the other members of the Committee, my grateful acknowledgments of the generous intentions entertained on my behalf. Be assured that nothing more is needed to satisfy me that my public conduct has been too indulgently recognised.

All I ask, in conclusion, is that I may be permitted to leave you for a short time without any recommendation to strangers except such as may be fairly drawn from my services to my adopted country.

(Sgd.)

HENRY PARKES.

Mr. HIGGS.—It is only fair to our Prime Minister to say that he pays his way, whereas Sir Henry Parkes went insolvent for over £100,000.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I take no part while discussing a matter in the proceedings of those who would disparage the dead, and especially the distinguished dead.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—The disparagement in the honorable member's case is of the distinguished living.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I am only sorry that so able and distinguished a gentleman as the Prime Minister should have in the honorable member for Illawarra so cheap and persistent claqueur.

I do not intend to entrench unduly upon the time at our disposal. Honorable members opposite, including the Prime Minister himself, may think what they will of my action. They will probably think ill of it, and if they do it will not be the first time they have done so. But I can take the flattering unction to myself that there has never been an occasion when I have spoken in this Parliament—except when, perhaps, I have been indulging in a little airy persiflage by way of obvious jest—that I have not spoken from a more or less compelling sense of public duty. I do that to-day. I tell the Prime Minister that I speak in no spirit of unfriendliness to him. This subject, which engaged the thought of the great framers of our Constitution, is worth reconsideration to-day. And, seeing that the matter is one which may reflect, although even remotely, upon the good name of the Commonwealth through its chief spokesman, it is worthy, I think, of a courteous statement by the Prime Minister. Honorable members of this House have bitter and unscrupulous enemies outside. There are individuals and newspapers more than ready to asperse us, and to attribute base motives. I candidly admit that I reluctantly acknowledge the Prime Minister's position. He knows that I am opposed to him, and would cheerfully remove him with the legitimate weapons of party warfare; but this is not one of them.

The terms of the Constitution are clear. We have made out a *prima facie* case that the money received by the Prime Minister was for services rendered in his official capacity to the Commonwealth of Australia. I acquit him of personal corruption, but nothing more subversive of the public interest than that groups of moneyed men should get together and reward any honorable member for his conduct of the business of the House or for anything of a public nature that he has done outside the House. The reasons were well stated by Sir Henry Parkes.

It has been suggested by the Treasurer that I have acted in an un-

sportsman-like way. What would have been said if I had waited until the right honorable gentleman had left these shores, and then, behind his back, had submitted this motion? Every one knows that in the short time that has elapsed since we resumed there has been no opportunity for the consideration of a motion of this kind. There has been no such opportunity because of the matters obtruded on this House by the Government itself—matters which we say should not have been brought forward—and in the discussion of which, I would say, if it were parliamentary to do so, that time has been wasted. I have nothing further to add, nor have I any apology to offer for having introduced this question. I regard it as urgent and as one that merits a complete and courteous answer. If the Prime Minister and the country are satisfied, then nobody need be so sensitive in the future.

Mr. HUGHES (Bendigo—Prime Minister and Attorney-General) [12.20].—I shall detain the House for a very few minutes. The honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) has occupied a great deal of his time in explaining that in all he has done he has acted from a high sense of public duty. I leave that statement where it stands. I leave it to the people of Australia to draw their own conclusions from his speech and his attitude towards me and the party which I have the honour to lead as to whether or not he was in this case actuated, as he declares, by a sense of public duty.

I shall deal with the question from the constitutional stand-point. The honorable member says that I have done something which, under section 45, paragraph (iii) of the Constitution, involves vacating my seat. I could understand very well such a contention coming from a layman, since the mazes of the law are such that the average citizen finds himself continually in difficulties when trying to thread his way through them. But the honorable gentleman is a member of my own profession, his speech shows signs of most careful preparation, and it is evident that he has refreshed his memory by reference to the Constitution. He said that probably I should endeavour, by reading from the *Convention Debates*, to show what were the intentions of the framers of the Constitution in regard to section 45. Anticipating

such an intention on my part, he said that, where the language was clear, the Court would ignore the intentions of the framers, and look only to the plain wording of the section. That is quite true. It is one of the fundamental principles of the interpretation of law. Let us, then, look at the section and see what it says. That having been done, I shall then quote from the *Convention Debates* in order to show what were the intentions of the framers of it. Section 45 provides that if a senator or member of the House of Representatives —

- (iii) directly or indirectly takes or agrees to take any fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth or for services rendered in the Parliament to any person or State: his place shall thereupon become vacant.

The honorable member says the intention of the section is so clearly expressed as to leave no room for doubt as to what it means. He contends that it applies to the presentation of a testimonial by citizens of the Commonwealth to a member of Parliament, and that the act of receiving a testimonial is in itself sufficient to subject a member to the penalties of paragraph iii of section 45. The honorable member's interpretation of the section is so entirely wrong that it will not bear examination for a moment.

The paragraph forbids two things—(1) the taking of a “fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth”; and (2), the taking of a fee or honorarium “for services rendered in the Parliament to any person or State.” The first part of the paragraph, dealing with the taking of a “fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth,” refers not to the receipt of fees for work done for any citizen or any number of citizens of Australia, but to fees received from the Commonwealth for work done for the Commonwealth as a constitutional entity. It refers in particular to payment received for Crown briefs, or to payment by the Commonwealth for work done for the Commonwealth. The honorable member has so twisted the word “Commonwealth” as to make it appear that the word used in the section is synonymous with the people of Australia, or any section of them. It is abundantly clear that this is not the

intention, either obvious or implied, of the section. The “Commonwealth” means the Commonwealth Government or the Commonwealth as a constitutional entity. That and nothing more.

The second part of the paragraph refers to the taking of any fee or honorarium “for services rendered in the Parliament,” which means the Parliament of the Commonwealth. The plain and obvious intention of the section is to prevent a member of this Parliament from taking a fee from the Government for work done in the Parliament or outside in his capacity as a member of Parliament. I would not even like to say that the paragraph goes so far as to prevent the Attorney-General taking a fee. It probably does; yet honorable members know that it is a very common practice in some of the States for the Attorney-General to take fees. The honorable member for Batman knows very well that I have never taken a fee or honorarium in that capacity. These, then, are the obvious intentions of section 45. These are the acts at which the provision was aimed. The intention of the section is not confined, as is the case in some States, to Ministers only, but extends to all members of Parliament. It has reference to a state of things which existed at the time of the framing of the Constitution, and in some State Parliaments exists now, where a man, who was a servant of the Crown, might yet receive an honorarium for doing work for the State of which he was already the servant. No doubt such a fee might influence a man's vote. Mr. Carruthers—Sir Joseph Carruthers as he now is—when moving the insertion of the section at the Adelaide sittings of the Convention in 1907, said, as reported at page 1034 of the *Convention Debates*—

This will practically bring the Commonwealth law into line with the law that holds good in Victoria. I understand that there not only is a contractor debarred, but no person can accept a fee or honorarium. As I pointed out the other night, I see no reason why lawyers or professional men should be in a better position than other members of the community. There is just as much likelihood for abuse to creep in if you allow them to accept fees or honorariums as there is in the payment of contractors. I only desire that in a matter of this kind, if we legislate against contractors, newspaper proprietors, merchants, and ordinary tradespeople,

we should also legislate against any member of a privileged profession from doing that which is admitted to be wrong in others. I will say nothing about corruption; but if there be a principle in the matter, and it is a good principle in one case, it is equally good in the other.

Sir George Reid, speaking in the Federal Convention, held in Melbourne in 1898, moved an amendment to insert in the section "or for work done or services rendered in Parliament for or on behalf of any other person." He said—

I do not suppose it happens in the colonies—at any rate, I know of no such case—but it has been stated that members of Parliament, even in the colonies, have accepted payment for putting Bills through the Houses. As I have said, I have never known of a case of the sort, but it is quite possible such things have happened. We do not wish such a condition of affairs to arise. If we disqualify a man for performing service for the Commonwealth for payment, it is equally important that he should be disqualified for accepting fees for work done in the legislative body. Under the latter circumstance, the member works under false pretences. He appears to work in the public interest, when really he is accepting payment for putting measures through the Legislature.

The intention of the section then is perfectly clear on the face of it; and it sets out what the framers of the Constitution as expressed in their speeches obviously desired.

I invite the honorable member (Mr. Brennan), who professes to take the liveliest interest in upholding the honour of this Parliament, to take the case to the only place where it can be definitely determined. I am amazed that he has so long delayed doing what he now asserts he does from a keen sense of public duty—I am amazed that he has so long allowed the honour of his country, and of the first Legislature of his country, to rest under this imputation. I invite him to ask the High Court of Australia to say whether I, whom he describes as the custodian of the honour of Parliament, and as the principal offender, have been guilty of violating the Constitution and the honour of this Parliament, which I have sworn to uphold. I invite the honorable member and all those who say that under section 45, or any other section of the Constitution, I have done that which is improper by receiving this testimonial, to take the matter to the High Court. The honorable member says that he takes this action from a keen sense of public duty.

Mr. Hughes.

I have been longer in politics than he has. Does he say that an honorarium must necessarily take the form of money? Suppose that, instead of a cheque, I had received jewels, or something that could be converted into money, would that have been less corrupt than the receipt of money, or would it be said that section 45 would not equally apply to the one case as to the other? It happened to me in New South Wales in, I think, 1899, to receive from my constituents a testimonial of £150 for services rendered to them during the great plague. The watch I am wearing I had given to me at the same time. I invite honorable members, and I invite the honorable member for Batman, in spite of all that has come and gone, and of what has been said to-day, to come to my house, where they may see dozens of testimonials, pieces of plate and other articles of value, that I have received from trade unions, and from my former constituents. Does he say I may take testimonials, money, or things that can be converted into money or articles of intrinsic value from trade unions or from my former supporters in the Labour party with impunity, but that my seat must be declared vacant if I take them from any one else? Is it the amount that the honorable member cavils at, or is it the thing itself? Does he say that it takes £25,000 to bribe me, while others may be bribed with £50? Unless I do the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) a wrong, I fancy that once in his career the trades unions enabled him to take a trip—provided the money for it. Does any one who knows the honorable member say for a moment that it was an improper action on his part to receive the money?

Mr. ANSTEY.—But I did not get it.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The time of the Prime Minister has expired.

Mr. HUGHES.—Then I ask for leave to continue my speech.

Leave granted.

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member for Batman has sought to show that other men, relatively in the same position as myself, and offered by their fellow citizens some expression of their goodwill and approval, have spurned a gift—

I thrice presented him a kingly crown, Which he did thrice refuse.

The honorable member says that the late Sir Henry Parkes was offered

money and refused it. For the best part of my life I was a citizen of New South Wales, and I know that Sir Henry Parkes took the money—he refused it, but he took it.

I do not apologize for receiving this testimonial. It is true that I have been singled out in this honorable House, composed of men of eminent virtue whose records are written in letters of shining gold. Who am I, an insignificant pigmy, that the people of the country should select me as the recipient of this munificent mark of their appreciation? I wish I could congratulate every one of my honorable friends in this House on having received a testimonial; if they had, I should never have said, "You ought not to have taken it." No man has endeavoured to serve his country more faithfully than I. Whether I have succeeded is a matter of opinion; but we must remember that it is only five years or less ago that the honorable member for Batman would have been the first to say that I had served my country well. He and I have differed, and on a point that has really nothing to do with the principles that underlie the Labour movement or politics. He knows there is a gap between him and me that neither time nor even Providence can span; he knows, too, that this difference arises out of our breeding and our race. But does he condemn me for this: not that I have done wrong, but that I differ from his opinions? I have done what I think to be right. I have never questioned for a moment that the honorable member is sincere. I have opposed him, and he me; but I have never told him that he is not sincere, because I believe that he is; and he should give me credit for being, at least, as sincere as himself. I took testimonials when I was Leader of the honorable gentleman—when I was unanimously chosen as the Leader of the Labour party. I say that all honorable members who were in the Labour party's room on that eventful day when we parted company know that, had I chosen, even after all that had happened, I could have remained Leader. But I shall leave that on one side.

Does the honorable member for Batman say that the people of this country, or any of them, have no right to express their appreciation in terms of

money if they like, of a man who, in their opinion, has served his country well? I am a poor man. I have given, not like some men the fag-end of my life, but my whole life, to my country. I say deliberately that I could have made far more money outside of Parliament than in it. Some people in this country, and the soldiers amongst them, were desirous of expressing their appreciation of my services, and they did so. I stand here now and make no apology whatever for having taken the money my fellow-citizens gave me. I am now, as I always was, a man who will take his own line, though a thousand may say to me, "Do this," or "Do that." No body of men better than honorable members on the other side know that that was my way from the beginning; that it is now, and will be my way to the end.

MR. BAMFORD (Herbert) [12.42].—With a certain amount of diffidence I follow the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) on this question, but I wish to recall some incidents to honorable members opposite. I submit that there is no difference between a presentation in money and a presentation in kind. I was the first recipient of a presentation in this Parliament. The chain I wear—not the watch, that is elsewhere—was given to me for services I had rendered to the Labour party up to that time. The then Leader of the Labour party, Mr. Christopher Watson, had a valuable presentation made to him, and so had the ex-High Commissioner, Mr. Fisher, these being in kind, not in money. I now come to an event which is retained in my memory because of my association with it. I wish to contrast the action in Opposition of the party which now sits on the Government side with the action of the party now in Opposition. The honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) and the honorable member for Yarra (Mr. Tudor) will remember that a former member for Coolgardie, when severing his connexion with a newspaper there, received a presentation of £400. On that occasion there was no murmur from the then Opposition; no one made any accusation of impropriety against the honorable member. My association with that event is that I bought—I emphasize

the word "bought"—a number of Melbourne newspapers, which contained an account of the presentation, and sent them to constituents in my electorate. It was "bread cast upon the waters" that never returned; and the result fixed the event in my mind. There have been so many instances of the kind, not only here but elsewhere, that I wonder the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) should have brought the present case before the House. Something was said yesterday by an honorable member about "playing the game." I certainly do not think the action taken this morning is "playing the game," for, to my mind, it is not compatible with the dignity of the honorable member for Batman, or with the dignity of the House, that a matter of the kind should be discussed.

I rose merely to relate my own experience in this connexion. Of course the value of the present I received was very insignificant in comparison with that which is under discussion to-day. I thank the Prime Minister and the honorable member for Yarra for their instrumentality in getting that little tribute for me. I was certainly taxed about it a good deal, and to make matters worse, I was robbed when standing on the back of the tram on my way home at night. Several people asked me what brand of liquor I had been drinking, but that my misfortune was not accounted for in that way was proved by the fact that on the following day Sir George Turner was treated in the same manner, when proceeding to open a bowling green at St. Kilda. Presentations of the sort under discussion are quite common occurrences, and it seems to me that the head and front of the Prime Minister's offending was the largeness of the amount he received. I can only add that if I were offered £25,000, or even any smaller amount, as recognition of my public service, I would accept it gratefully.

Mr. RYAN (West Sydney) [12.47].—No honorable member who takes an impartial view of this matter will think that the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) was actuated by anything other than the highest sense of duty in bringing this matter before the House. Anybody who listened to the

moderate language he employed when moving the motion can come to no other conclusion; even the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) must hold that opinion. It would have been quite unnecessary for the honorable member to take the course he has taken if replies had been vouchsafed in a courteous manner to questions asked yesterday of both the Prime Minister and the Treasurer. The Prime Minister simply answered "No."

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member for Batman asked me if I intended to take the matter to the High Court, and what else could I answer?

Mr. RYAN.—The Prime Minister must have misunderstood the question, because that is not what the honorable member for Batman asked him. In any case, he could have given yesterday the same answer as he gave this morning, but he replied with a curt and abrupt "No," and the Treasurer's answer was exceptionable for the same reason. The matter of the presentation to the Prime Minister has been much discussed amongst the public and in the press. There is no honorable member who would wilfully make any suggestion of corruption unless there was the strongest evidence of it, and the honorable member for Batman merely asked for information, because, as he put it, a *prima facie* case was made out by the telegram sent by the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) to the Prime Minister in Sydney at the time the presentation was made. In that telegram the Treasurer offered the congratulations of his colleagues to the Prime Minister on the handsome gift of £25,000 which he was receiving for, amongst other things, services rendered to the Commonwealth.

Mr. HUGHES.—The money was not paid by the Commonwealth.

Mr. RYAN.—I am not suggesting that it was. I do not wish to enter into the strictly legal aspect of this matter, because, whether or not it comes within the strict wording of the Constitution in such a way as to disqualify the Prime Minister from holding a seat in this House, no one will deny that it is of great interest to the people to know the source from which presentations come to honorable members, particularly those who hold responsible positions, while they are

in charge of public affairs. The Prime Minister will admit that.

Mr. HUGHES.—Of course I do.

Mr. RYAN.—It is important to find out who were the contributors, but we have received not a word of enlightenment on that subject.

Mr. HUGHES.—I assure the House that I do not know the name of one person who contributed to the fund.

Mr. RYAN.—I am not suggesting that the Prime Minister should say one word more than he has said. That is entirely a matter for his judgment. But it is of great interest to the public to know who the donors were, because the impression has got abroad that the presentation came from very wealthy sources. As the honorable member for Batman said, amongst those present on the occasion of the presentation were the representatives of very big businesses.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Has anybody ever suggested that the money was obtained from the Commonwealth Treasury?

Mr. RYAN.—Nobody has ever suggested that.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Well, can there be any doubt as to the legality of the presentation?

Mr. RYAN.—Nobody would be so foolish as to suggest that the money came from the Commonwealth Treasury, but there is an impression abroad that the money came from those who have large financial interests, and had big business transactions, possibly with the Commonwealth, during the period of war. After all, most people think that gratitude is a lively sense of favours to come, and that, whether or not a presentation comes within the embargo imposed by the Constitution, it is not desirable that responsible Ministers, while still in charge of the affairs of the country, should accept large gifts from persons who may subsequently have business dealings with the Government. I do not suggest that the Prime Minister would be influenced by the presentation; I would be sorry, indeed, to suggest that he would do anything corrupt, but I do suggest that there is a possibility that he might have a kindly feeling—he could not help it—towards those who were good enough to make the presentation.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The Prime Minister said that he did not know the

name of one donor. Therefore, it is unfair of the honorable member to say that he might have a kindly feeling towards the donors.

Mr. RYAN.—Surely the Prime Minister knows the names of some donors.

Mr. HUGHES.—I do not know one.

Mr. RYAN.—Then may I suggest that it would be desirable to advise those who organized the presentation that they should make public the names of the donors.

I wish to say a word upon the constitutional aspect of the matter. That cannot be determined in this House. The honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan) has addressed to the House a very clear and logical argument, and any one who reads paragraph iii. of section 45 of the Constitution must come to the conclusion that, no matter from what sources a fee or honorarium for services rendered to the Commonwealth comes—and by the Commonwealth the people of Australia are meant—

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member knows that that is not so.

Mr. RYAN.—I do not. On the contrary, I am saying that the honorable member for Batman has addressed to the House what appears to me a very clear and logical argument on the matter.

Mr. HUGHES.—Do you mean that the Commonwealth and the people of Australia mean the same?

Mr. RYAN.—I do not say that.

Mr. HUGHES.—If that were so, no member could take a brief from anybody.

Mr. RYAN.—I understand the distinction which the right honorable member has drawn between the Commonwealth as a constitutional entity and the people of Australia, but he has placed upon section 45 a construction different from that given to it by the honorable member for Batman. I invite the consideration of the Prime Minister as Attorney-General to the meaning of the words "services rendered in the Parliament to any person or State." The section does not refer to a fee or honorarium received from any person or State. If any person in Parliament renders a service to some person or State, it matters not from what source the fee or honorarium comes; it need not come from the person or State receiving such service to bring it within the ban of paragraph iii. of section 45.

Mr. HUGHES.—Suppose the honorable member were differently situated, and a widow decided to leave him £50,000 because he had done well for his country?

Mr. RYAN.—Why does the Prime Minister suggest a widow?

Mr. HUGHES.—Because I assume that if she were not a widow the honorable member would have nothing to do with her.

Mr. RYAN.—I do not wish to be drawn off my argument. It is quite clear that if a fee or honorarium is received from any source for services rendered in Parliament to any person or State, the seat of the recipient is rendered vacant. The Prime Minister said that the honorable member for Batman might test the matter by taking it to the High Court. The honorable member has taken the first step necessary to test the matter by giving the Prime Minister an opportunity of making a frank statement as to the transaction. But as a matter of fact, the statement made by the right honorable gentleman does not disclose anything other than that he has received a presentation for services rendered in his public capacity, but there is no disclosure as to the sources from which the money came. If the right honorable gentleman does not wish to give that information that is his affair, but the public can form their own opinion. As I read the Constitution, this matter cannot be tested by the High Court unless it has been referred to the Court by resolution of this House.

Mr. HUGHES.—I think the honorable member is wrong.

Mr. RYAN.—I refer the Prime Minister to section 47 of the Constitution, which reads—

Until the Parliament otherwise provides, any question respecting the qualification of a senator or of a member of the House of Representatives, or respecting a vacancy in either House of the Parliament, and any question of a disputed election to either House, shall be determined by the House in which the question arises.

Parliament has otherwise provided in the Electoral Act, section 203 of which reads—

Any question respecting the qualification of a senator or of a member of the House of Representatives, or respecting a vacancy in either House of the Parliament, may be referred by resolution to the Court of Disputed Returns, by the House in which the question arises, and the Court of Disputed Returns shall thereupon have jurisdiction to hear and determine the question.

Under section 47 of the Constitution the power of decision rests, in the first place, with the House in which the question arose, but legislation has been placed on the statute-book which enables the House to refer the matter to the Court of Disputed Returns, which is the High Court. Would the Prime Minister be agreeable to have such a reference made upon this matter, the constitutional aspect of which, he will admit, is not quite clear? The Constitution of the Commonwealth is different from the Constitutions of the different States. In the Federal instrument, we have a specific prohibition against certain things, and, in my opinion, it is desirable that a question should be referred to the High Court without prejudging the actual matter under discussion.

Debate interrupted under standing order 119.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

Debate resumed from 21st April (*vide* page 7663), on motion by Mr. HUGHES—

That the paper—League of Nations—Mandate for German Possessions in the Pacific Ocean situated south of the Equator, other than German Samoa and Nauru—be printed.

Upon which Mr. RYAN had moved—

That after the word “printed” the following words be added:—“but, in the opinion of this House, the representative of Australia at the forthcoming Imperial Conference shall not be empowered to commit Australia to any agreement or understanding except on the condition that the same shall be subject to the approval and ratification of the people of Australia.”

Mr. FOWLER (Perth) [2.15].—The debate on this most important matter has been pursuing a somewhat haphazard and interrupted course. I regret that very much, not so much on my own account, but because of the very great importance of the issues that will be discussed at the Imperial Conference, and more particularly as they may affect Australia. I do not know, in all my experience or reading, of a position fraught with greater possibilities, either for good or for evil to Australia, than that which will confront the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) upon his taking part in the Conference in London. In the circumstances, therefore, as much time as was possible should have been devoted to this discussion, so that the Prime

Minister might have been armed with a general expression of opinion from all members of the House, which would have been of undoubted use to him. Interesting speeches have been made in the course of the debate. Some have been helpful, while others have been of somewhat doubtful value. I confess to a feeling of surprise—I might almost say of amazement—at certain of the observations uttered. I listened to the forceful speech of the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey), but I regret that that gentleman, in discussing the relationships of the various parts of the Empire, and particularly the relationship of the Mother Country with Australia, indicated that he saw very little in it to admire. His ideas with regard to the conditions under which Great Britain has exercised an interest in Australian affairs were very deplorable. According to him all the interest taken by England in Australia was due to the most ignoble motives. I am certain, that his anticipations concerning possible developments in connexion with the proposed renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty are very far fetched. The honorable member for Bourke waxed eloquent in his protest against the probability—as he put it—of Australian soldiers having to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Japanese against a people of our own kith and kin. I am unable to see that probability at all; I do not think it was worth while discussing. The Imperial authorities have very carefully safeguarded the Empire against any such possibility. It is unthinkable, so far as Australia herself is concerned, and I can conceive of no Imperial Government attempting to coerce us into taking part in a conflict which we would abhor.

Another honorable member gave utterance to a most regrettable statement when he insinuated that there were English statesmen ready to betray our White Australia policy. I do not think there is even the faintest suggestion of such a possibility to be found in the sayings or doings of English statesmen from the first day when the policy of White Australia was enunciated here.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I think there are many of them who are careless of its maintenance.

Mr. FOWLER.—I do not think even that remark is justified, because the honorable member will look in vain through

the records of the actions and utterances of British statesmen for any hint of an objection to the policy which Australia has adopted.

Mr. FENTON.—A number of Australians, while on the other side of the world, have conducted a very serious propaganda in Great Britain.

Mr. FOWLER.—No doubt an alarmist propaganda has been at work in Australia, too. It has not been entirely friendly to the Commonwealth in its origin, but has sought to work up some trouble between ourselves and the Motherland. However, there is no indication of any weakening on the part of British statesmen in connexion with the policy of a White Australia. And it has not been an altogether agreeable policy in some respects. It has meant a certain amount of difficulty in connexion with the relationships of other portions of the Empire. Yet, in spite of that British statesmen have been uniformly loyal to the great Australian conception. I enter my protest, therefore, against any suggestion to the contrary. It has not been justified up to the present; and the Prime Minister, when he meets Imperial statesmen in London, will find that they are prepared, as they have ever been, to maintain to the utmost of their powers the policy on which Australia has set her heart as vital to our existence.

There is another phase of the White Australia question to which I desire to refer. That is the suggestion that this policy has been challenged by Japan. I do not wish to pose as an apologist for Japan in this connexion. Japan is a country which might, in certain circumstances, develop a line of action somewhat hostile to Australia; but, up to the present, we have no right to harbor any thought of the kind so far as that country is concerned. Japan has been thoroughly loyal to her alliance with Great Britain; and, as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Tudor) remarked, the White Australia policy has remained intact from its inception, so far as concerns any effort to disrupt it by Japan. There is no indication that Japan has registered any serious objection to this policy. Nor could Japan consistently do so, seeing that it is a matter of life and death to that country to keep herself free from the swarming

hordes of China which, if allowed to enter without hindrance, would overwhelm the Japanese. Japan cannot keep Chinese coolies out of Japan and then with consistency turn round and demand free access for her people into Australia. But it may be suggested that we have only to look to recent history in the United States of America to realize the possibilities of trouble for ourselves. I sympathize with the people of California in the difficulty in which they are placed with respect to their Japanese fellow-residents; and I realize that, in their interests, something must be done to put an end to a state of affairs which provides for them a second colour problem on top of the one which they have been enduring for so many years. But the Japanese difficulty in the United States of America is almost entirely the making of the people of that country themselves. Under an arrangement agreed upon when Mr. Taft was President, Japanese have been freely admitted. They entered in fair numbers, and, on the Pacific coast particularly, they were actually welcomed.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—That is, as labourers.

Mr. FOWLER.—Quite so; Americans who are settled along the Pacific Coast are largely engaged in fruit and vegetable growing for canning and curing for the markets of the world. They needed labour, and the immigration of Japanese solved that problem for them to a large extent. So they welcomed the Japanese, gave them employment as freely as they came into the country, and were able to pay them good wages. But the Japanese, being progressive, and thrifty, did not all remain content to be wage-earners. They saved, and they looked around to do something better for themselves. Land was difficult to obtain, and the best of it had been taken up long previously, but there were certain possibilities in connexion with areas that the Americans had left severely alone, regarding them as worthless tracts which appeared to be utterly unfit for agricultural purposes. For these lands the Japanese made offers, and I have no doubt that the Americans who sold the apparently worthless land to them chuckled as they did so, thinking that they were taking the Japanese down. But the purchasers happened to know what they were doing, and in a very short time they

turned these areas into highly profitable fruit and vegetable farms, with the result that at the present moment they are competing formidably with the native Americans. It is just at this moment that the Americans have realized the danger of Japanese immigration. These immigrants were all right when they came into the country as coolies, but the position altered considerably when it was realized that the former coolies were now amassing wealth and securing a considerable amount of the trade which the Americans had previously monopolized for themselves. Japan is taking up an attitude in regard to these immigrants for which no country could blame her. She is merely asking that those who were not only admitted to the United States, but also welcomed there, shall not be treated differently from other immigrants entering the United States under the same conditions. Any nation with a regard for its honour could do nothing less for that portion of its people which find themselves threatened with the imposition of serious disabilities after having been tolerated and encouraged for a considerable time, and I have no doubt that some way out of the difficulty will be found. To my mind, Japan is not to blame for the course she is taking in this connexion.

As long as we are prepared to look the situation fairly and squarely in the face, we need have no difficulty with Japan. I do not think there is the slightest inclination on her part to send her people into Australia in any considerable numbers, because she has better methods of utilizing her surplus population near at hand. In fact, it will be bad policy for her, as well as for any other country, to dissipate her people over a widely scattered portion of the earth. As Japan is over-populated, she must have expansion. A prolific and progressive country is entitled to that so long as there are any waste spaces of the earth available. The large areas of land in Manchuria and Siberia which can be made available for her surplus population will suit Japanese expansion far better than Australia. Japan is somewhat late in seeking room for expansion and the areas available for her are undoubtedly limited; but she has done nothing more than copy the methods adopted, not only by Great Britain, but

also by all other countries, when the necessities of a super-abundant population compelled them to take action. If Japan is given reasonable scope in the parts of Eastern Asia to which I have referred, there need be no fear whatever about her bothering us with claims that portion of our territory should be allotted to her, or that her people should be allowed to enter Australia in any considerable numbers, to the detriment of our own settled policy and ideals.

Mr. FENTON.—The honorable member makes reference to "considerable numbers." Would he permit some Japanese to enter Australia?

Mr. FOWLER.—No. We need not open the door in the slightest degree. There must be no trucking with our policy in that regard, and, therefore, at the London Conference we must have a clear and definite declaration that there is only one course open to Australia consistent with its safety, and that is that our shores shall be maintained inviolate against any of those races whose ideals and methods of progress are alien to our own.

Mr. FENTON.—Does the honorable member also include the mandatory territories?

Mr. FOWLER.—That is a question I would like to discuss; but time will not permit me to do so. However, if we assume responsibilities in connexion with those mandated countries they must have some relation to our general policy. Therefore, it would be unwise to have any relaxation of the White Australia principle, or at least of the native population principle in favour of Japan or any other country not included in the mandatory powers we have acquired over these islands.

There is one thing I will say now that probably runs counter to the ideas of honorable members and many people outside. We are somewhat proud of the newly-obtained ideal of "Australia as a Nation." I am not sure that we as yet realize all the responsibilities connected with that expression, and there is one responsibility in particular which has not been mentioned in the House, but which should not be lost sight of: that is that the very fact that Australia has claimed, and has obtained, nationhood in the brotherhood of the Empire has to a large extent prevented the United States from

accepting the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I do not know how far the honorable member intends to take the word "claimed." If he means that we wrested this from Great Britain I repudiate his statement at once.

Mr. FOWLER.—No. I was referring to our being a nation within the brotherhood of the British Empire. I cannot conceive of Australia desiring to be a nation under any other condition. But what I maintain is that our new nationhood has militated very seriously up to the present against the possibility of the United States of America coming into the League of Nations. Great Britain has under that scheme of nationhood for the younger offshoots of the Empire obtained, so the people of the United States say, an undue preponderance of votes on the Council of the League of Nations.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—There was an easy answer to that over there, and that was that America practically controls nearly all the votes on the American continent.

Mr. FOWLER.—But she has not that close and friendly association with the nations of South America that our Mother Country has with the rest of the Empire. At any rate, it is an undoubted fact that the strength of the British Empire in the Council of the League of Nations is one of the reasons, if, indeed, it is not the principal reason, for the United States remaining outside the League at the present time when we are all anxious that that country should become a member of it.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member will not get any responsible American statesman to make that statement.

Mr. FOWLER.—I am interpreting what I take to be the general consensus of American opinion as expressed in some of the best magazines, and by some of the most representative publicists of that country. Statesmen as we know, with the exception, perhaps, of our own Prime Minister, are given to thinking a great deal and saying very little; but I feel sure that those who have expressed the objection I have mentioned to the present constitution of the League of Nations on behalf of America are saying what is felt very strongly throughout the whole of that great country. If the difficulty could be overcome in some way or

other, say, by allowing the Empire in all larger matters to be represented on the Council of the League of Nations by no more than a number of votes corresponding to the representation of the United States of America, something very useful would be achieved, and the road would be made smooth for the introduction of America into the League.

We are very proud also of our Australian Navy. We have heard a great deal of talk as to the necessity for maintaining it, and in some quarters it has been urged that it should be considerably enlarged. It was brought into existence because of the German menace. That menace has now disappeared, yet still we insist upon the maintenance of an Australian Navy. Why? Let us be quite frank. Because of the possibility of danger coming to us from Japan. If there is danger in that direction, does any honorable member in the House imagine that the mere handful we could put on the seas in the shape of an Australian Navy would be of the slightest use? Would it not be absolute murder for the Government to send Australian seamen on our few ships to compete with the might of Japan? Under any circumstances whatever, could we hope to create a Navy that would be anything more than a mouthful to Japan, if the worst came to the worst?

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—What about submarines around the coast?

Mr. FOWLER.—That is another matter; but when we come to talk about the development of the Navy in the ordinary sense of the word, I say, without hesitation, that we could spend the money to far greater advantage than by putting £6,000,000 to £10,000,000 into a capital ship which, assuming we are in danger from Japan, would add practically nothing to our security. Seeing that the existing Australian Navy is now practically so much scrap iron, that it is already obsolete, and that there is no danger to be apprehended from any quarter, I think that, for the time being, we might very well call a respite from the building and equipment of any war ships, and put the money to purposes that will give better results in connexion with the maintenance of our White Australia, and the development of the Commonwealth as a nation within the Empire.

These observations apply also to the army. The gilt-edged military gentlemen who have put forward bloated estimates in connexion with the establishment and development of an army should tell us for what purpose such an army is required. The most we can do in that direction is to waste money in a futile fashion.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—But would the honorable member stop the development of armaments here on the strength of a treaty with a nation which kept on piling up its own armaments?

Mr. FOWLER.—We might very well follow the example of the Mother Country and, for the time being, call a halt in connexion with our armaments. No danger threatens Australia at the present time.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We are following the Mother Country now.

Mr. FOWLER.—We have here some 300,000 trained men who would give a very good account of themselves if we came to blows on land, while, so far as blows on sea are concerned, I do not think there is the slightest danger before us.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Does not the honorable member know that the Imperial Government has increased its Army since the Armistice?

Mr. FOWLER.—It was compelled, under certain circumstances of a temporary character, to maintain an Army in excess of that of the pre-war period. But the Mother Country has, to a very large extent, scrapped her Navy. She is building no more war-ships and, in view of the unsettled state of expert opinion as to what constitutes the most effective methods of war at sea—

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—But did not the honorable member see in the press the other day a statement to the effect that the British Government had got a vote of £4,500,000 on account of a new programme of four modern battleships?

Mr. FOWLER.—I did. I do not say that she is not looking carefully at the position, and making some preparation, but £4,500,000 would not build a single battleship.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Quite so, but it provides for a beginning, and the vote of £4,500,000 secures parliamentary approval of the scheme to build four modern battleships.

Mr. FOWLER.—May I suggest to the Treasurer the lines upon which Australia can proceed in order to make our resistance to trouble the more effective when trouble is likely to come upon us? The money that is being spent just now on naval and military developments, to a large extent, is being entirely misapplied. Take, for instance, the fact mentioned in this House, that we have not a Naval Base that will accommodate one of the larger ships of war. We have had reports from experts regarding the absolute necessity of having, at least, one Naval Base to meet the requirements of the Imperial Navy. Fremantle has been pointed to as being the important Naval Base, but, for many years, the Government have simply frittered away money there in doing practically nothing. Our very first step in naval development should have been to create at least one Naval Base for the refitting and repairing of such Imperial ships of war as might have to operate in this part of the world.

Then, again, there is the creation of a uniform gauge of railway. There is nothing more urgent in connexion with the defence of Australia. Some of the money being wasted on our present warlike preparations could, with advantage, be used in a development of that kind. Lastly, and by no means least of all, we need, as has also been said in this House, to fill up our waste spaces as fast as we can with people of our own kith and kin. A great deal of time has been wasted in that direction. The present opportunity is a good one to secure population, and this or any other Government worthy of the name, should devote almost every ounce of its energy and every penny we have to spare to the settlement of these large areas which are crying out for population, without which our control of Australia must always remain open to challenge.

The Prime Minister is going home on a very delicate and difficult task. I should like to suggest to him a course that he ought to adopt; but I am afraid I shall be suggesting something which is rather impracticable. The right honorable gentleman's policy is always to take a strenuous and leading part in the councils of the Empire. I would suggest that the policy of Australia at the present

time is not to take a strenuous and leading part, except in so far as is necessary to safeguard our interests, but rather to keep somewhat in the background until the international situation clears up. At present, it is both difficult and uncertain. Our safest course, I think, would undoubtedly be to stand by until the situation is relieved as between these two countries—the United States of America and Japan—where we see trouble brewing just now. There is nothing to be gained by haste, and the only fear I have regarding the Prime Minister's errand to London is that, with his usual temperamental peculiarities, he may say, and do, more than is entirely safe in the circumstances. I would suggest, therefore, that, if possible, he should adopt a policy of caution and reticence as the one best suited to the circumstances of Australia at this juncture.

I come now to what is to me a most important, though to some of my listeners a somewhat intrusive subject. In the invitation given by the Prime Minister of Great Britain to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, it was stated that, in addition to the matters specifically mentioned as to be dealt with at the Imperial Conference, there were many other subjects which might call for consultation and decision. There is one matter of predominant importance just now to the Empire; there is one great trouble right at its heart. I refer to the Irish difficulty, and do so with a certain amount of hesitation, because I know how readily in Australia one is liable to be misunderstood and misrepresented in discussing Irish affairs. But there can be no doubt whatever of the seriousness of the Irish problem to the whole Empire. It is no longer a matter as between England and Ireland. It affects vitally our relations with the United States of America. In the main, this country is friendly to the Empire. But the trouble in Ireland is carried over into the United States of America, where several million Irish votes play no small part in determining the attitude towards Great Britain. Observers have expressed the opinion that, until the Irish question is satisfactorily settled, the friendship of Great Britain and the United States of America cannot be as close as it could and should be. I have before me the *Contemporary Review* for March, in which

there appears an instructive article entitled, "A Plea for Conciliation," by an English publicist. The writer says that, when travelling recently through the United States of America, he found that there was only one opinion regarding the Irish question, and that was, "Get it settled for Heaven's sake, and then we can come together in the permanent bonds of friendship." We, in Australia, in common with the rest of the Empire, are waiting anxiously and eagerly for such a coming together of the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. It behoves us, therefore, to do anything and everything within our power to bring about that happy state of affairs.

I have thought anxiously and long over this particular trouble. I do not want to-day to discuss either the rights or the wrongs of the Irish question. I desire merely to suggest what appears to me to be a method of solving the problem, and I put it to the Prime Minister as something which I hope will be worthy of bringing before the Conference. A little while ago I addressed a letter on the subject to the editor of the *London Times*. I do not know whether it is in print. Sufficient time has barely elapsed to allow of its publication, but in that letter I embodied my suggestion, and as I put it in as condensed a form as possible, and as well as I could, I shall take the liberty of reading it in the hope that the view therein expressed will commend itself to the Prime Minister, to members of the House, and also to the press and public of Australia. In the hope that it may help to resolve a long-standing and difficult problem, I now read the letter—

17th January, 1921.

THE "IRISH" PROBLEM.

To the Editor of the "*Times*."

Sir,

Although the awful state of affairs in Ireland is of the gravest concern to the whole Empire, it might hastily be said that any one daring to offer a suggestion towards a solution of the problem from the remote antipodes was hardly in a position to make an effective contribution to it. But the distant observer has usually the advantage of obtaining the more comprehensive view and the truer perspective. He will not perceive the smaller details, and yet, by reason of this, be all the better able to realize the situation. There is such a thing as being unable to see the forest for trees, and this to the writer's mind is precisely the position of those who are right in the thick of the

Mr. Fowler.

Irish tangle. The two countries immediately concerned—England and Ireland—have striven for many years to arrange their difficulties. Every effort has failed, the patience and forbearance of both parties are utterly at an end, and a position has been reached which menaces, not only the peace, but the very existence of the Empire. Surely, when face to face with such a state of affairs, the British people throughout the world have a right to some say about it. More than that, I feel strongly, as one with a considerable political experience who has given some study to this question, that the Empire should not only be consulted regarding it, but that in this way the solution of the hitherto insoluble Irish problem can be reached. If ever England and Ireland were in the frame of mind to arrive at a mutually satisfactory understanding, they are certainly not so to-day. Then why not call a family conference, which, while thus emphasizing and maintaining the relationship of its members, would be specially competent to establish peace in the common interest between the two antagonistic brothers.

Reduced to definite shape, my proposal is that an Empire Commission should be appointed to go into the whole Irish question with a view to its settlement on a just and sound basis. The Commission should be composed of equal numbers of representatives chosen by the Parliaments of the self-governing Dominions of Canada, Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. The three senior members of the family—England, Scotland, and Ireland—would also, of course, be represented on the Commission. The importance of the undertaking should insure a careful selection of the most suitable men. They would conduct their investigations with the great, and, indeed, unique advantage of the good-will and confidence of the two parties immediately concerned, and their findings and recommendations would have a weight and value far beyond any of the efforts yet made to bring to those Isles of Britain—which we of the outer circle of the Empire still call "Home"—the peace and the unity which should be associated with that sacred word.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. M. FOWLER.

Mr. HUGHES (Bendigo)—Prime Minister and Attorney-General [3.3].—I desire to address myself to the amendment moved by the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan). The amendment raises a question that must involve a division in the House, if the honorable member calls for one; and so it is essential, as it seems to me, that I should set out the views of the Government in regard to the position put forward by the honorable and learned gentleman. In the course of his speech, the honorable gentleman stated that Australia ought to be committed to the

Anglo-Japanese Treaty; nor ought I to be given any authority to express the approval or disapproval of Australia in regard to it, unless and until it has been submitted to the people. As I understand the honorable member—and I have tried to do so, although it was my misfortune not to hear him—he meant a submission direct to the people by way of referendum, taken either at an election, or at some other time. But the amendment of the honorable member is not limited to the Treaty, but extends to all matters of foreign policy—to naval and military defence and, in short, to all matters that may be discussed by the Imperial Cabinet, whether involving expenditure, or of interest to the people of Australia. I leave on one side, for the moment, all matters excepting the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, because, as I understood, the honorable gentleman chiefly directed his remarks to the Treaty. But before dealing with the honorable member's amendment I wish to congratulate the House, and honorable members who have spoken, on the tone of the debate. There may be one or two exceptions—I have not heard them—but in the main honorable members have done their country infinite service by refraining from reflecting on foreign nations in a way calculated to make the task of those who are to represent the British Empire still more difficult than it is. I think that the reputation of Australia, and of this, its national Legislature, is enhanced by this debate. It has shown that we are capable of dealing with great questions in a great way. These encomiums, which I pass without reservation on my fellow-members, are not to be interpreted as meaning that I am necessarily in agreement with all that has been said, but of approval of the manner in which they have expressed their opinions. But there has been disclosed, during the debate, amazing misconceptions of the relations that actually exist between this Dominion and Great Britain. And statements have been made with which I entirely disagree—statements disparaging the Empire. The reflections made upon the Empire last night by the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) were most unfortunate and unjust. He implied that the Empire's guiding principle is self-aggrandizement—that the Empire, and particu-

larly Great Britain, is actuated by the most sordid motives. I do not contend for one moment that our race is guiltless of those errors which others have committed. We are not, any more than other men, flawless, but at this time, when the Empire is surrounded by enemies, secret and open, it comes with very bad grace from an honorable member of this Commonwealth Parliament, which speaks for Australia, which is and desires to continue as an integral part of the British Empire, that almost every nation on earth should be lauded and the Empire held up to ridicule and contempt. I for one will always couch a lance for the Empire in which I believe. It is most unfortunate, in my opinion, that the British Commonwealth is known to foreign nations as an Empire. It is the most democratic form of government the world has ever known. I ask my fellow-members to point out in the history of any nation throughout the ages its parallel. Where is there, or has there ever been such a community of free nations enjoying to the full such rights of self-government? Where has Democracy such triumphs as amongst those nations which compose the family of the British people? I will not tamely submit to listen to diatribes about "Imperialism," as if this Empire of ours, which I prefer to call the British Commonwealth, were an Empire such as Germany, Russia, or Ancient Rome. The word "Empire" does not fit our circumstances. We are a federation of free peoples, and history may be ransacked in vain to find a parallel to the constitution under which we live, the liberties we all enjoy, and the ideals that animate us.

Let me now turn to the amendment of the honorable member for West Sydney. The honorable member for Bourke, in supporting the amendment, said that the amendment did not bind us to a referendum. But the honorable member for West Sydney, who ought to know what it means, says that it does. He said that one of two things must happen—either Great Britain could make this Treaty without consulting us, or we would be bound by the Treaty whether we liked it or not. From that he went on to paint a picture in which he represented the Anglo-Japanese alliance as a net in which we were enmeshed, and which would presently, in company with the Japanese, entangle us in a war against our cousins

in America. It is the habit of the honorable member to be carried away by his own eloquence, which all honorable members admire, and no one more than I; but if the honorable gentleman had listened carefully to what I said in my opening remarks he would know that I had expressly declared that one of the chief difficulties in the problem now confronting us lay in drafting a Treaty satisfactory to Britain, Japan, and ourselves, which would not involve us or Britain in a struggle with the people of the United States of America. For I said that, as I saw it, the peace of the world for which all men prayed depended upon an understanding of some sort between America and what is known as the British Empire. So I put aside that horrific panorama of words conjured up by the honorable member and refer him to the plain facts of the case and to what I said. And I lay it down as an axiom that we must not be embroiled in war with America. I said that it might be difficult to arrive at such an understanding as I indicated; some people might think it impossible, but we ought not to be deterred by mere difficulties. As to impossibility, no one ought to say that a thing essential to our welfare and the peace of the world was impossible until at least every avenue had been explored and every means exhausted to achieve it. That brings me to the point I particularly wish to emphasize. The honorable member has said to me, "We will not give you the right to speak for Australia," and it is obvious that I cannot speak for Australia if what is to be done is to have no effect unless, and until, it is submitted to a referendum of the people. The honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) speaks quite lightly of a referendum. Perhaps, if he had had as much experience of referenda as I have had he would not so lightly turn from the beaten path of parliamentary government, especially on a matter of such vital importance as the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. The honorable member does not understand the position. He seems to think, and certainly the honorable member for Bourke said, that if Great Britain renewed the Treaty and went to war with America, which is unthinkable, and the possibility of which exists only in the imagination of those two honorable gentlemen, Australia would be involved. Do honorable members really believe that? Let us

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look at the question fairly. I said last night, when the honorable member for Bourke was speaking, that we are not bound by any Treaty which we ourselves do not ratify. I speak not at all of the practical consequence to us of any act of Britain, but of the effect of the Treaty itself. The practical consequences of Britain going to war with America, or any other nation, whether Japan was or was not our ally, would have to be faced by us. But one thing is certain, that whether we ratified the Treaty or not our position while we remained an integral part of the Empire would for all practical purposes be the same. The paper which is the subject of the motion we are discussing sets out the text of the various treaties existing between Britain and Japan. So far as I know this Parliament has not assented to any one of them, and, technically, is no more bound by them than if they did not exist. Therefore, when the honorable member for West Sydney says that he would ask the people, "Are you in favour of that Treaty or not?" he is proposing to ask them to give a verdict upon an issue which is not before them. Let me speak plainly. I say, unhesitatingly, that if this Treaty were renewed in its present form—it cannot be, and I will tell the House why—it would not bind this country to go to war with America or Germany or any other country. Our liability in regard to wars in which Britain is involved arises not out of any treaties, but out of our relation to Britain and to the Empire generally. When Britain goes to war, then, *ipso facto*, we are at war also. Whether we elect to send troops out of Australia is another matter. But that we should be at war with Britain's enemy is certain. The best proof of that is what happened when Britain went to war with Germany. We were never compelled to send troops to assist Britain. We did that of our own free will. But we were at war, not because of a treaty, but because the British Empire is to a foreign nation an indivisible entity. I come now to another point.

During the progress of this debate some honorable members have spoken of the ever-widening powers of the Dominions, and have censured the Government and me, as their representative, for seeking those wider powers of

self-government which I, as an Australian, not by birth, but by residence of nearly forty years, thought the people of the Commonwealth desired. Do they not realize that at this moment there resides in the British Parliament power to make laws for this country? This morning, the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan), the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan), and I quoted from the Constitution. What is that Constitution? It is a British Statute, and technically—the practicalities are not affected in any way—Britain can repeal that Act to-morrow, and, legally, as the honorable member for West Sydney knows perfectly well, it would be binding upon us. But is there one man, no matter how perfervid a worshipper of England as against Australia he might be, who would bow the knee to a British Statute which took away our rights of self-government, or of any British Statute, unless it were passed by the expressed wish of the people of this country? Does any one believe for a moment that Britain would pass such a Statute or do anything to impair in the slightest degree the right of this country to govern itself in its own way? If all these facts are unassailable, and no one will deny that they are, what are we to think of honorable members suggesting that we should submit to a vote of the people of Australia a Treaty to which this country's assent is not necessary, and will not be called for—a Treaty which can be made over our heads, no matter what form it takes? This Treaty is one between Britain and Japan. The Peace Treaty was in a different category, because the representative of Australia was invited to append his signature to it. But so far as the Anglo-Japanese Treaty is concerned it is a treaty between Britain and Japan. Does any one deny that, if Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa were not represented at the Imperial Conference, Britain must either renew the Treaty or allow it to lapse? The position is very clear: the Treaty, if renewed, will be between Britain and Japan, but because the Treaty affects or may affect the whole Empire, the British Government has invited the Prime Ministers of the Dominions, who are members of the Imperial Cabinet, to come to London to discuss this and other matters, so that the views of the whole Empire may be

heard and considered, and not merely that of Great Britain alone. I think I am entitled, in view of what has been said, to quote a few paragraphs from the cablegram I sent to the British Prime Minister, and to which his cablegram was a reply. When the question of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty was mooted, the Government cabled to the Imperial Government that we hoped that this matter would not be considered without ample opportunity being afforded for the wishes of Australia to be ascertained. Time went on, and as the period was short, it was decided by Great Britain, as a *via media*, to renew the Treaty for twelve months. After I had been advised that in all probability the Constitutional Conference could not be held this year, and as no arrangement had been made which would enable Australia to state her views upon the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, which affects her so vitally, I telegraphed, in October of last year, to the British Prime Minister, as follows:—

In my opinion, it is absolutely essential that the Dominion Prime Ministers should meet in London next year. We ought not to, in fact, we dare not, allow ourselves to drift along. The necessity for a clear understanding or policy, call it what you will, on certain matters vitally affecting the Empire is urgent and obvious. I know, of course, that the difficulties in the way of a common foreign policy are most formidable. Empire problems are many and complex; they clamour for settlement, and I feel quite sure that as time goes on a solution will be less easy. I most earnestly recommend that you call a meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers next year in London—say, about June. Delay for another year is most dangerous.

It had been originally understood that the proposed Constitutional Conference was to be held this year. But the other Dominion Prime Ministers intimated that they could not attend, and it was postponed. It was then suggested by Mr. Lloyd George that a meeting of the Imperial Cabinet—that is, of Prime Ministers—should be held in Ottawa about the end of last year. That also was found to be impossible. The Anglo-Japanese Treaty affected us vitally. Other matters of foreign policy hardly less so, and there was the question of naval defence about which some decision—whether based on Lord Jellicoe's report or not—could not be postponed. As I

pointed out when speaking originally upon this motion, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty affected us very much more than it did any other of the Dominions; and I thought Australia's views should be heard. The Prime Minister of Great Britain (Mr. Lloyd George) agreed that they should; and he agreed, too, that it was essential that we should endeavour to come to some common understanding in regard to matters of foreign policy, including defence. In the ordinary course, these matters would have been discussed along with the consideration of constitutional changes, if any. As I have already said, I am opposed to constitutional changes. The question of the renewal of the Treaty, however, is, as I see it, a matter upon which our voice ought to be heard, and without delay; and we have been invited to express our opinions. But, if we did not express our view, if we sent no one to the Conference, or if we expressed our opinion only here, the British Government would have to take its own course, and either renew or refuse to renew the Treaty. If it refused to renew it, in any shape or form, is there any honorable member who would be prepared to take responsibility for seeking to compel or induce the British Government to do so? I would not be. I fully realize the dangers of Charybdis, but I see also those of Scylla. The hope for the peace of the world lies in an alliance, or understanding of some sort, with the United States of America, and I would as soon think of jumping from the Tarpeian rock as of agreeing to anything that did not clearly set out our position in regard to the United States of America. This, then, is the position. It is essential that we should know where we stand on all these matters. It is essential that the Anglo-Japanese Treaty should be renewed, and should be renewed in a form that will not give offence to America. But I want to say that there is nothing to submit to the people of this country as regards the Japanese Treaty. Long before the Australian public could approve or disapprove, the Treaty will be renewed or else allowed to lapse. If our people do not approve, that will not alter matters by one-thousandth part of an inch. I say so

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for this reason: I am not the mouthpiece of Britain upon the subject, but I feel sure that I do speak for what the majority of Britons think. There is no possibility of Britain ever going to war with America. The British people will not have it; and there is an end to it. If honorable members knew how far Britain went out of her path in the course of the Peace Conference to avoid giving umbrage to America, and how much Britain sought to do that which was pleasing to America, they would realize that the last thing that any British Government would think of would be to become embroiled in a war with the only nation in the world which, with our own, can hope to maintain the world's peace.

The honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan) has said that we must submit this matter to the people. On my return from Britain, if the Treaty as drawn up and agreed to is not satisfactory, this Parliament can say, "We will have none of it"; and we can renounce it. But the practical consequences will remain, and Australia will have to face them. Let me remind honorable members that since 1902 the Anglo-Japanese Treaty has been in existence, and this Parliament has never made the slightest effort to express an opinion concerning it. There has not been the hint of a desire on the part of this country that Australia should not be a party to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. And, if war were to be precipitated to-morrow—as war broke out on 4th August, 1914—with Britain as a party, what would Australia do? We are told by some honorable members that it is now the settled policy of their party that Australians shall not fight outside of Australia. Those honorable members are most amusing. They say that there is a danger arising from the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, that Australians may be compelled to fight outside of Australia—to fight against America. Australia need not fight against anybody by virtue of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, because Australia need not approve it. But, under the Covenant of the League of Nations, which this Parliament has solemnly ratified, Australia will be compelled, if and when the League so decides, to send her quota

of Naval and Military Forces against any nation in the world. These loud-mouthed gentlemen who eulogize the League—the Covenant of which they swallowed because they believed it emanated from some source other than Great Britain—now say that there is a danger in the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, under which Australia has existed for more than eighteen years and has ignored it. The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) said we shall never fight side by side with Asiatics. Britain has never sought, and never will seek, to compel us to fight at all. She has never done so. What we have done has been done of our own free will. But the honorable member's memory is most convenient. What are the facts relating to the war? Our first Australian Division would never have left these shores had they not been under the protection of a Japanese Fleet. They were kept in Australia until that Fleet could arrive in our waters in sufficient strength to escort our Forces in safety. And not only that: The *Emden* would not have been sunk but for the Japanese Fleet. I recall that in those days some honorable members suggested in this House that we should hire Russians to fight for us, because it would be cheaper and safer! As a matter of fact, during the war we fought side by side with Asiatics—those of us who did fight; we fought side by side with Indians, and with Japanese, and against a white race, and a Christian race at that; people whom my friend the honorable member for Bourke was lauding last night, namely, the Germans.

MR. ANSTEY.—I rise to a point of order. The Prime Minister has deliberately misrepresented me; and I ask for the withdrawal of his objectionable statements.

MR. SPEAKER.—Order! The honorable member has not stated a point of order. If he desires to make a personal explanation, he will have an opportunity to do so.

MR. HUGHES.—The honorable member for Bourke said we would never fight by the side of Asiatics, that Australia could not be compelled to fight with Japan, even against Asiatics. Is not the honorable member known to be, together with the honorable member for Barrier

(Mr. Considine), one whose ideal leaders in the world to-day are Lenin and Trotsky? And by what means do these men whom my friends almost deify maintain and uphold the dictatorship of the so-called Russian proletariat? By Chinese, by Chinese troops, bandits, cut-throats. And yet in the face of these facts the honorable member says he will not fight by the side of Asiatics. The honorable member has a good word for every country but his own.

Our interest lies in the security and maintenance of the world's peace. I shall go from here to endeavour to carry out what I believe to be the wish of every Australian, namely, to assist in the preservation of the world's peace. An alliance, an understanding with America, is essential. But we cannot afford to quarrel with the Japanese, and I believe a renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty is in the best interests of this Commonwealth. We have our own ideals, and we must stand by them.

When the matters discussed at the Imperial Conference that affect Australia are decided, and before one penny of expenditure shall have been incurred or pledged, everything will be brought to this Parliament. And, if this Parliament in its wisdom rejects the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, then let it do so. But I must be free to speak what I believe to be the opinion of the people of Australia on the matter. That I shall do. The Treaty will be in force. After that, honorable members, if they wish to speak on behalf of Australia, and to withdraw themselves and Australia from the Treaty, can do so. It will make no difference. The practicalities of the situation must be faced.

The Government cannot accept the amendment of the honorable member for West Sydney (Mr. Ryan). The Government give an assurance that all matters involving the expenditure of public moneys, and affecting the interests of this country, such as the questions of naval and military defence, and any schemes for the adjustment of foreign policy, together with the terms of the Anglo-Japanese alliance—if it should be renewed—will be brought before this Parliament. I am not going to the Conference saying that I do not know what are the opinions of this Parliament, for I do know. This Parliament has told me; the country has told me. I know, and I

propose to try to enshrine those opinions and beliefs in the Treaty.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! The time allotted to the debate has expired.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added (Mr. RYAN's amendment)—put. The House divided.

Ayes	23
Noes	41

Majority	18
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AYES.

Anstey, F.	McGrath, D. C.
Blakeley, A.	Moloney, Parker
Brennan, F.	Nicholls, S. R.
Catts, J. H.	Riley, E.
Charlton, M.	Ryan, T. J.
Considine, M. P.	Stewart, P. G.
Cunningham, L. L.	Tudor, F. G.
Gabb, J. M.	Watkins, D.
Lavelle, T. J.	West, J. E.
Lazzarini, H. P.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mahony, W. G.	Mathews, J.
Maloney, Dr.	Page, James

NOES.

Atkinson, L.	Hill, W. C.
Bamford, F. W.	Hughes, W. M.
Bayley, J. G.	Jowett, E.
Bell, G. J.	Lamond, Hector
Best, Sir Robert	Lister, J. H.
Blundell, R. P.	Livingston, J.
Bowden, E. K.	Mackay, G. H.
Cameron, D. C.	Marks, W. M.
Chanter, J. M.	Marr, C. W. C.
Chapman, Austin	McWilliams, W. J.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Page, Dr. Earle
Corser, E. B. C.	Poynton, A.
Foley, G.	Prowse, J. H.
Foster, Richard	Rodgers, A. S.
Fowler, J. M.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Francis, F. H.	Smith, Laird
Greene, W. M.	Wienholt, A.
Gregory, H.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hay, A.	Burchell, R. J.
Higgs, W. G.	Story, W. H.

PAIRS.

McDonald, C.	Bruce, S. M.
Makin, N. J. O.	Gibson, W. G.
Fenton, J. E.	Jackson, D. S.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Original question put. The House divided.

Ayes	42
Noes	21

Majority	21
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AYES.

Atkinson, L.	Hughes, W. M.
Bamford, F. W.	Jowett, E.
Bayley, J. G.	Lamond, Hector
Bell, G. J.	Lister, J. H.
Best, Sir Robert	Livingston, J.
Blundell, R. P.	Mackay, G. H.
Bowden, E. K.	Marks, W. M.
Cameron, D. C.	Marr, C. W. C.
Chanter, J. M.	McWilliams, W. J.
Chapman, Austin	Page, Dr. Earle
Cook, Sir Joseph	Poynton, A.
Corser, E. B. C.	Prowse, J. H.
Foley, G.	Rodgers, A. S.
Foster, Richard	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Fowler, J. M.	Smith, Laird
Francis, F. H.	Stewart, P. G.
Greene, W. M.	Wienholt, A.
Gregory, H.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hay, A.	Burchell, R. J.
Higgs, W. G.	Story, W. H.
Hill, W. C.	

NOES.

Anstey, F.	Maloney, Dr.
Blakeley, A.	Moloney, Parker
Brennan, F.	Nicholls, S. R.
Catts, J. H.	Riley, E.
Charlton, M.	Ryan, T. J.
Considine, M. P.	Tudor, F. G.
Cunningham, L. L.	Watkins, D.
Gabb, J. M.	West, J. E.
Lavelle, T. J.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Lazzarini, H. P.	Mathews, J.
Mahony, W. G.	Page, James

PAIRS.

Jackson, D. S.	Fenton, J. E.
Bruce, S. M.	McDonald, C.
Gibson, W. G.	Makin, N. J. O.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [3.57].—I respectfully draw your attention, sir, to the fact that, in speaking to the motion which has just been disposed of, I tried to discuss the arguments of my opponents, and not to impugn their motives. I appeal to you and honorable members generally to say whether that has not always been my policy. I have not the slightest doubt that from time to time I shall be lied about unconsciously, but I strongly object to being lied about deliberately in your presence. I distinctly object to the utterly uncalled-for statement made about me by the Prime Minister. No utterance of mine has ever justified what he said about me, and he knows, when he makes a reflection of that sort on me, that it is not true.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! The honorable member knows that he must not use that phrase.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Then what must I say?

Mr. SPEAKER. — The honorable member must express himself differently.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Without my expressing it, you will understand quite well what I mean. The Prime Minister, without any utterance or action on my part to call down such abuse on my head, referred to me as one who was anti-Imperial and pro-German. I strongly object to that statement. My attitude on these matters is known. It is the attitude that for a hundred years has been taken up by Englishmen whose love of their country is unquestionable. It is the attitude taken up by Sir Phillip Gibbs and others. When I speak of England, I speak for the mass of the people who belong to England, and not for the particular class that happens to be dominant in its politics. If, after the lapse of time since the war ended, the Prime Minister feels that it is in conformity with his honour and sense of decency to still pursue assiduously such a policy of slander, I must leave him to it, but I draw your attention, and the attention of the House, to the fact that there is not, and never has been, anything in my public conduct to give any grounds whatever for such an utterance.

Mr. HUGHES (Bendigo—Prime Minister) [4.0].—I think I am entitled to ask what all this is about. What did I say? I heard every word the honorable member said last night, and if he did not impute motives to persons on this side and to certain people elsewhere, and did not attempt to hold up England to ridicule and contempt, then I do not know the meaning of words. I prefaced what I had to say by speaking in the highest possible terms of members of this House, but added that I did not agree with some of their statements. I did not agree with the statements of the honorable member, and I thought it my duty to express my opinion.

ADJOURNMENT.

ARBITRATION COURT.—IMPERIAL CONFERENCE DEBATE.

Motion (by Mr. HUGHES) proposed—
That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [4.2].—I asked the Prime Minister yesterday a

question regarding the necessity for appointing additional Judges to the Arbitration Court to hear cases regarding the reduction of working hours. The right honorable gentlemen, in reply, said that in some instances these cases had been hung up by the action of Mr. Justice Higgins, and pointed to the fact that Mr. Justice Powers had dealt with many cases. I have here, and want to put on record, a copy of the report of cases heard before Mr. Justice Powers, because I wish the Prime Minister, before he leaves, to know that there is trouble brewing if something is not done to rectify these things. The report I have here is that of the cases of the Federated Gas Employees Industrial Union *versus* the Metropolitan Gas Company and others, and also the Federated Gas Employees Industrial Union *versus* the Brisbane Gas Company and others. I will read sufficient to let the Prime Minister see that he is wrong. The report reads as follows:—

Mr. Crofts.—The next is claim 20, hours and overtime. Your Honour has intimated that you intend to postpone the question of hours.

His Honour.—If you want a reduction of the recognised hours I must postpone that.

Mr. Crofts.—Before Your Honour definitely announced the postponement of the consideration of hours, I may say we are very anxious to have some specific statement from Your Honour as to what is likely to happen in regard to that question of hours. This organization has been endeavouring for years past to get its hours reduced. In 1918 we asked Mr. Justice Higgins for a rate of hours as to the ordinary work.

His Honour.—He did not promise you you would get it.

Mr. Crofts.—No, certainly not; but we have been fighting for a reduction of hours.

His Honour.—I understand your position.

Mr. Crofts.—Our men have had their hopes built up, and they have been waiting for this case. During the gas workers' strike last year we came to a settlement with the companies. It was on the understanding that the matters not fixed up then should be dealt with by the Court; and one of the matters left with the Court was the question of hours.

Mr. Crofts.—It may be that Your Honour has no power to do this. If so, Parliament or some one else should be impressed with the importance of this question. The men engaged in this industry have waited for the Court, and now find that Parliament has acted in such a way that this Court cannot deal with the matter. I am afraid that something will happen in this industry as it did in regard to the wages. Therefore, I should like, if possible, to get a definite statement as to when

this union is likely to have the question of hours decided. I hope Your Honour will intimate that at an early date.

His Honour.—It will be done as soon as ever I possibly can arrange it.

Mr. Crofts.—That may be this year or next year; but have I to go back to the members of the organization and say, "Your case for hours has been placed before the Court, and His Honour Mr. Justice Powers will deal with it as early as he possibly can?" If so, they will want to know whether the Act has been altered, and whether Mr. Justice Powers will have the right to go on with it.

His Honour.—You know, of course, I am not going to comment on Acts of Parliament; but you know, Mr. Crofts, Parliament has passed an Act which prevents my doing it; and until Parliament amends that Act I cannot do it. It has also been made public that I have made suggestions. I cannot do more.

Mr. Crofts.—Boiled down, it means that this or any other organization cannot have the question of hours decided by this Court.

His Honour.—Not until Parliament sees fit to alter the law, and gives the Court power to deal with it. At present they have not a Court that can deal with it because there are not at present available a President and two deputies. All I can suggest to you at present is that the unions should try and induce Parliament if they think it is right, to try and amend the law. I cannot express an opinion as a Judge on what Parliament does. If the union consider it a breach of faith, Parliament is the authority that must be approached. I have quoted sufficient to show the Prime Minister that these cases are being held up to-day in consequence of the Act passed by us requiring that the question of hours shall be dealt with by three Judges. Mr. Justice Powers says that in these circumstances he cannot deal with such a matter. That is altogether different from the statement made by the Prime Minister as to the settlement of a number of cases. Mr. Justice Powers says that if Parliament will amend the law he will be able to deal with the question. The Prime Minister is about to leave Australia, and we do not want any industrial trouble to occur during his absence. That being so, the Government should make available the machinery necessary under the law for the settlement of questions of this character. Unless they do that we must expect trouble. I ask the Prime Minister, therefore, to attend to this matter before he leaves for England.

Mr. HUGHES.—The honorable member came to me only yesterday about an industrial trouble, and I settled it. Every

Mr. Charlton.

day he has some further trouble to bring before me.

Mr. CHARLTON.—It is my duty to assist the Prime Minister and every one else in preventing, as far as possible, the occurrence of industrial trouble. I am here for that purpose, amongst others, and I shall continue to bring such matters before the Prime Minister, whoever he may be.

Mr. HUGHES.—Who has provided more machinery for the settlement of these troubles than I have done?

Mr. CHARLTON.—That is no answer to my complaint. The right honorable gentleman knows very well that as the result of a measure recently passed by us the question of the hours of employment can be dealt with only by three Justices. Many of us opposed that provision when the Bill was before the House, but he held strongly to it. If we expect industrial bodies to carry on under that law it is only reasonable that the Government should put in operation the machinery for which it provides, so that their disputes may be settled. I shall bring before the Prime Minister industrial troubles that I think he may help to settle, and whenever it is necessary to do so in the interests of the country I shall appeal to the head of the Government, no matter whom he may be.

Mr. FLEMING (Robertson) [4.9].—I desire to enter an emphatic protest against the way in which the Government have dealt this afternoon with what is undoubtedly one of the most important questions that has ever come before this Parliament. An arrangement was entered into that the debate on the motion relating to the Imperial Conference should close at 3.45 p.m. to-day. I rose on three or four occasions with the object of expressing my views in reference to our representation at the Conference, but was not afforded an opportunity to do so.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—Order! The honorable member is now reviving a debate that has already been closed.

Mr. FLEMING.—I do not intend to debate the question. I desire merely to complain of the way in which the Government have carried the matter through.

Mr. SPEAKER.—That would be a reflection on a vote of the House. The honorable member may not do that.

Mr. FLEMING.—May I not deal with the Prime Minister's conduct this afternoon in regard to the motion?

Mr. SPEAKER.—No.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [4.10].—I desire to support the request made by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) in regard to the Conciliation and Arbitration Court. This Parliament deliberately passed an Act giving employers and employees the right to settle their disputes in a Court of Conciliation and Arbitration instead of having to resort for that purpose to strikes and lock-outs. If the Government are not prepared to amend the Act, which provides that the question of the hours of labour in an industry shall be dealt with by not less than three Judges, they can get over the trouble by administrative act. All that it is necessary for them to do is to appoint the number of Judges required to constitute the requisite Court to deal with such questions.

Mr. HUGHES.—The difficulty is that there is a member of the Bench who says he is going to resign. The honorable member knows how long he has been making that statement; and yet he has not resigned.

Mr. TUDOR.—I know that there are difficulties such as that to which the Prime Minister refers; but even with Mr. Justice Higgins as President, and Mr. Justice Powers as Acting President of the Court, only two Judges are available, whereas the Parliament, despite the protests of the Labour party, insisted that three Judges should be necessary to determine the question of hours of employment. Our view is that if it is competent for one Judge to determine questions of wages one should be sufficient to deal with the hours of labour in an industry. I know of no surer way of creating industrial trouble than by having the men in a particular trade working forty-four hours a week side by side with another body of men who are compelled to work forty-eight hours a week.

Mr. MAXWELL.—We want uniformity.

Mr. TUDOR.—As far as possible. The Government should make it possible for an appeal to the Court to be made. This afternoon I received a request from the secretary of the Trades Hall Council to arrange for an interview with the Prime Minister on this subject. The right honorable gentleman on several occasions has pointed out

that the Industrial Disputes Committee of the Trades Hall Council has done good work in preventing disputes.

Mr. HUGHES.—It certainly has.

Mr. TUDOR.—It has done good work in preventing and also settling disputes. The Committee desires to wait as a deputation on the Prime Minister in regard to this very matter. It holds that the question of hours must be settled in the near future. I ask the Government to give the matter very serious consideration. We are all apt to make mistakes, and I think it would be wise for the Government and the Parliament to say that a mistake was made in providing that the question of the hours of labour to be worked in any industry should be dealt with only by a Court of three Judges. Let us go back to the old order of things, under which such a question could be dealt with by one Judge. Failing that, the Government should appoint the number of Judges necessary to enable the machinery of the Act in question to be put into operation.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND (Illawarra) [4.12].—It is necessary that there should be an early settlement of this matter. I can hardly conceive of the Government permitting the present condition of affairs to continue. Here we have a learned Judge paid to do the work of a Court, yet refusing to deal with business which is brought to that Court. I do not know what are the powers of the Government, but that the business of the country should be held up by a highly-paid official who refuses to deal with it, and at the same time says he intends to resign but does not resign—

Mr. TUDOR.—That is not correct. Mr. Justice Higgins said he would complete all the cases, the hearing of which he had commenced.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—But he announced some months ago that he would take no new business, although the country is paying him to deal with the business of the Court. The position is intolerable, and the Government should resolve it as early as possible.

Mr. RYAN (West Sydney) [4.14].—I support the request made by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton). I also have had communications in respect of the matter, and hope the Government will take an early opportunity to remedy the position that obtains. I desire to protest against the attitude taken up by the

honorable member for Illawarra (Mr. Hector Lamond). On almost every occasion that presents itself he attacks the President of the Conciliation and Arbitration Court.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That is not so.

Mr. RYAN.—It appears to me to be so. We shall be very fortunate if we are able to secure as the new President of the Court as good a man as Mr. Justice Higgins.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—But he is not justified in hanging on to his job months after he has said that he intends to resign.

Mr. RYAN.—He is not hanging on to his job. I am satisfied that he is doing his duty. It is unfortunate that a learned Judge can be criticised in this House, although no specific motion on the subject is before us. I rose to protest against the action of the Prime Minister and his Government in not placing on the table of the House at a much earlier date the documents which he read this afternoon, because I ascertained for the first time this afternoon that the Prime Minister himself was the instigator of the invitation issued to Dominions representatives to attend the Imperial Conference in June.

Mr. HUGHES.—When I learned that the Constitution Conference could not be held, I said that we ought to attend a

Conference to deal with the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

Mr. RYAN.—I understood the Prime Minister to say—and I will take an early opportunity to read carefully the right honorable gentleman's remarks this afternoon—that the Imperial authorities were prepared to allow this matter to go on for another twelve months.

Mr. HUGHES.—That is not so.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Elliot Johnson).—The honorable member for West Sydney must not discuss that issue on this motion.

Mr. RYAN.—Very well, Mr. Speaker, I shall confine my remarks to the desirableness—I am now speaking generally—of having all the documents placed in the hands of honorable members before they are called upon to discuss certain matters.

Mr. HUGHES.—It is impossible to place secret cables on the table.

Mr. RYAN.—Well, the cable was finally read in this House. If what I have suggested had been done, it might have altered the whole aspect of the discussion, because, listening to the right honorable gentleman this afternoon I gathered that the invitation to the Conference emanated from himself.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 4.17 p.m.

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1. Sworn 27th February, 1920.—2. Sworn 3rd March, 1920.—3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 4th March, 1920.—4. Made affirmation, 5th March, 1920.—5. Election declared void, 2nd June, 1920.—† Sworn 11th May, 1920.—6. Elected 10th July, 1920. Sworn 21st July, 1920.—7. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 13th May, 1920.—8. Expelled and seat declared vacant, 12th November, 1920.—9. Elected 18th December, 1920. Sworn 6th April, 1921.

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